Explanation: During our research for writing our doctoral thesis ***Philosophical Consolidation of the Theology of Dumitru Stăniloae***, in order to provide our research with as thorough as possible conclusions, we have translated philosopher Lucian Blaga's book *Religion and Spirit*, so that the English language readers of our thesis to have access at least to a sample of Lucian Blaga's philosophical works.
We think that an integral translation of Blaga's philosophical system must be done, and we also think that the panel undertaking that translation must mandatorily include Romanian philologists and philosophers, mainly because of some specific rhetoricity of Blaga's Romanian language, a rhetoricity that constitutes a main element of Blaga's style and that cannot be perceived, let's say, by a native English speaker who reads in Romanian.
This is a manuscript.

Dr. Marius Golea
Arad, 01. 27.2026

Religion and Spirit

By Lucian Blaga

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Introduction

The object of our philosophical examination is this time the religion. Guided by some thoughts which we expressed in other works, we aim to show what the religious values of the human spirit are being constituted like. The problems which we are interested in, are delimited by the religious phenomenon; still, in the present pages we are going to deal with only a few problems posed by this phenomenon. We have searched the questions which we have decided to analyze, among those having a crucial importance. The solutions suggested by us, solutions which have been dictated from the perspective of a quite coagulated philosophy from our previous works, they exceed quite well the problems which we are occupying ourselves here. With some goodwill and perspicacity, any reader will realize that so many annex problems which we are going to avoid treating, they still find their solution in the same perspective. Certainly, one can write many things on religion by adopting various points of view. As for us, we are announcing here our plan to expose, in a few main lines, a philosophy of the religion, namely the principle of reckoning the religious phenomenon according to methods and from angles characteristic to philosophy. We think that it is necessary to underscore that from the very beginning, in order us to avoid any misunderstanding or inutile disputes. Rightly so, the religious phenomenon allows to be regarded from other angles too and treated also according to other methods than the philosophical ones.

From philosophical point of view, our purpose is:

1. To show the variety of the religious phenomenon, especially under the report of some aspects which have been very less noticed until now.

2. To reach, step by step, to a definition of the religion more comprising and more adequate to its object.

3. To highlight the fundamental importance of the "stylistic" factors, regarding the constitution of the *religious values*.

4. To prove that the phenomenon of the mysticism, apparently to strange and exceptional, it is integrated in the human order as other phenomena of the creator spirit do as well.

Of course, during our expositions, we are going to reach a multitude of other questions, which have incidence points with the few mentioned problems.

From Indra to Nirvana

The spiritual life with all its ramifications, of India, it has been growing up luxuriantly, as a flourished jungle with trees suffocated by jungle vines, with huge flowers whose stems can only hardly be identified among the nameless and limitless vegetation. The Hindu thinking has been preserving, all along its millennial unfolding, a more obvious connection with the religious feeling than the Greek thinking ever did, or than the European thinking has been doing during the last centuries. If we weigh in, on one hand the development of the Greek Philosophy, from Thales to Plotinus or Proclus, or of the European thinking from Descartes up to this day, and on the other hand the uniform and mixed growing up of the Hindu thinking, this situation is going to be clarified by itself, even without a too thorough comparative study. The Greek thinking distinguished itself through a very accentuated autonomy, even when penetrated by mythological elements of by mystical motifs. It is a known fact that the pre-Socratics cultivated the reminiscences of a powerful mythical imagination or the Orphic darkness of a religiousness aiming to be evermore purified. The Greek thinking preserved its autonomy even when it overflowed, finally, in religious feelings obviously looked for and desired, as at Plotinus or Proclus. The same is the case with the history of the European spirit, which we can distinguish in precise phases of total independence of the thinking. It is true that the European thinking shows us another aspect too, for being prefaced by a long period, as we all know, of cogitation totally subservient to theology, namely by a long period which the philosophy was in some sort of heavenly bondage, having no other rights except to contribute with its activity, otherwise a very alive and nimble activity, to consolidate a corpus of fully established theses of theological nature. In the history of the Hindu spirit, the thinking does not know either the consummate autonomy nor the subservience to total humiliation. The Hindu thinking lives, ceaselessly, in some sort of symbiosis with the religion, being fructified, endlessly, on the ground of an undiminished reciprocity. From here, out of this symbiosis, it comes the most pronounced unity of equilibrium of the spiritual preoccupations in India, which is equally staunchly different from the interior dramatism of the European spiritual preoccupations. The symbiosis which the thinking and the religious feeling indulge themselves in, in India, it removes, from the beginning, the occurrence of those inward irreconcilable conflicts which are characteristic to the Western spirit. One must notice, on the other hand, that the symbiosis which we are referring to, it does not lead either, in

India, to that harmonic delimitation of the diverse spiritual interests, a delimitation that is so much praised as a virtue of the Hellenic spirit. Obviously, India's religious life has a more nebulous countenance than that of the Greeks, for its interests osmotically interweave with one another. It is a given fact that, by circumscribing those the Hindu, the Greek, and the Western spiritual lives, we are not doing else but preliminary sketching a situation, without confessing – relatedly to them – a personal preference. A researcher on the cultures, he is constraint to malleable and sympathetic attitudes, and to adhere, with a supreme suppleness, to all spiritual forms. A researcher of the cultures is forced, by a grave spiritual commitment, to somewhat overlook his own preferences, concerning the diverse forms of the human genius. So, the religious life in India seems as being perseveringly and ceaselessly fecundated by the philosophical thinking. In India, the religious life does not manifest the same uncontainable - slightly irritable – fear, of heresy, as in case of the officialized religious life in Europe. It is true, though, that in India, as nowhere else, the philosophical thinking maintains itself through its own gravity, on a few tracks of great continuity. This river-like continuity, with vigorous but calm waters, it is not due to a wanted or even organized interdiction, on the ground of sanctions, of any deviation from the consecrated ideas; the continuity is due to a natural integration of the thinkers in cogitation currents having riverbeds gradually grown over centuries. We are also underscoring that the Hindu thinkers are not dominated by a so violent pride of the "originality" as the Europe's individualistic thinkers are. Even when the India's thinkers are original, it happens that they do not have a too keen conscience of their originality, for they want to be, in the last instance, simple commentators of an inherited patrimony of ideas, a patrimony following only to be clarified and accomplished through the human existence. The symbiosis between the religious life and the philosophical thinking occurs in India as a phenomenon promoted by two capital circumstances. The religious man does not fear heresy, while the philosophical thinker is not touched, at all, by the passion of the singularity. This matching has created an optimal climate for the development of the Hindu spirituality. In Europe the things are totally different: here the philosophy and the religion have very many chances of divergent development. During the Middle Age - and since then up to these days - the church, especially the western church, allegedly intuited the very acute individualism of the philosophers, and it forbad them from being anything else but servants of the theology. Naturally, when Europe became liberal, the philosopher's individualism was triggered with the whole power. Each philosopher thought

everything from the beginning. By that, the religion and the philosophy found themselves in the situation of avoiding one another, or of combating each other.

One of the oldest forms of religiousness known to us is that of the Rigvedic man. Rigveda is, as we know, a collection of hymns or songs having a mythological-religious content, and it is the oldest document referring to the Hindus' spiritual life. Rigveda sons are at least three thousand years old. The hymnic texts were reckoned as sacred, and their words must be uttered by priests in order those words to achieve the needed magical power for persuading the god's will. The magical power of the sacred word uttered by priest, it plays a special role in *Vedda*, where this magical power is called "brahman". Intriguing, and worthy of being memorized, it is the fact that the Vedda Hindus believed in a hereditary magical power, or in a brahman-like faculty inherited from father to son, as a mysterious filiation aptitude characteristic only to some families. We are going to see that the idea of "brahman" or of magical power attributed to the prayer composes the beginning of a speculative ideation of a great interest. Let's mention that in the Rigvedic epoque, as also later on, the Hindus believed in a multitude of divinities. To the Rigvedic pantheon belonged divinities like: Agni, the god of the fire, or Indra, the god who liberated the cows from under the mastery of some demons, in order to give the cows, as a gift, to the Hindus, and many other gods which one could easily find striking parallels to, in so many other mythologies. For now, our attention is caught not by the main deities, but by a secondary deity, one very peculiar, and very symptomatic for the Hindu religiousness. This deity is called "Brahmanaspati". Indra, the king of the gods, had next to him a priestly helper of divine rank, a deity-priest, and that is Brahmanaspati. This Brahmanaspati is in the gods' world, and therefore he is within the whole world the supreme administrator of the magical power, namely a divine prototype of the priest. We may not be too wrong by affirming that Brahmanaspati represents the magical power personified and divinized as such. The figure of Brahmanaspati is a singular one. We do not know, anyway, there to be in the patrimony of a nation a separate divinity personifying the magical power attributed to the priest. Of course, we encounter at any nation on Planet Earth the idea of the "magic" but always as conceived like an impersonal and occult power attributed to the most diverse being" divine, demonic, or even to the common mortals, as for instance to sorcerers, and sometime even to the inanimate things or to some landscape places, or to some particular moments from the flowing of the calendar time. To the Rigvedic man, the master of the magical power it, in the first place, the priest. Full of significance, regarding his

hierarchical prominence, which the priest conquered in the Rigvedic life, it is the fact that the magical – brahman-like – power, it was divinized, in a special manner, in the person of God Brahmanaspati, and introduced, as such, in pantheon. In other words, the ritualic magic exercised by priest, it does not make only the occult connection between people and the mythological beings; the ritualic magic achieves a superior dignity, for it appears to be, itself, as personified in a divinity that is priestly by excellence. There are priests not only on earth; a prototype of theirs exists also in the gods' world, because the gods themselves need the priestly power. In a full of difficulties circumstance, even Indra, the king of the gods, he appealed Brahmanaspati, who came with his magical power and helped Indra. It turns out from here about the magical power in its plenitude, that not even the gods' king is master upon it, but the undisputable administrator of this magical power is only Brahmanaspati. The case of this priestly god seems very conclusive to us, for the mode of the Hindu religiousness during the Rigvedic period. The fact is, that to the Rigvedic mentality the magical power was, more than elsewhere, reckoned as a privilege of the priest, a privilege having its mythological extensions and projections. The situation granted to the priest, comparatively to other people, it is overwhelming. But the priest's magical power is not to be disregarded either relatedly to the divine powers. In the religiousness of the Rigvedic man we can distinguish - as a component – the very keen conscience that the priest would be the master of an impetuous magical power, a power which not even the gods can resist against. From here it turns out that the Rigvedic religiousness is not a religiousness of total man's humiliation in report with the gods, for the man thinks at himself as being capable of persuading the divine resistances through the brahman-like power attributed to the priest. Regardless the distance felt by man between himself and gods, the man does not lack – at all- his pride towards the divine beings. The magical power which the priest disposes upon, at will, it is not, therefore, a neglectable quantity in the relations between gods and people. The priest knows the magical formula and the correct way to utter it, and that makes wonders, and the priest also possesses a special correspondence with the magical power, on the basis of a gift inherited as a biological aptitude. Some theoreticians of considerable prestige, they defined the religious sentiment as a sentiment of total dependence of the man in report with the divinity. Surely, these theoreticians would feel themselves compelled to revise, or at least appease their definition, if they studied – with the due attention – the Rigvedic religiousness. It is very probable that the enormous prestige the priest enjoyed among the Rigvedic Hindus - for he was the handler of the word and of the

magical power – it led, quite quickly, to the mythological result which we have presented in the previous rows, namely to the divinization of the priestly power in the person of God Brahmanaspati. Despite this stage being an important one within the Hindu religiousness, it still is only one stage. In order us to understand, to some extent, the ulterior development of the Hindu religiousness, we have to suppose that there occurred a speculative phenomenon exceeding the simple mythological creation. The people must have asked themselves: if the priest enjoys a totally privileged situations among mortals, due to his magical-ritual power, why Brahmanaspati, the priest-god, not to reach himself, gradually, to enjoy a special situation among gods? The career of God Brahmanaspati in the history of the Hindy mythology is not known in all details. The unfolding of the mythology seems to us, right on this moment, as interrupted by a speculative intervention. Only if we suppose a speculative intervention of the nature of the question that we have just formulated, we will be able to identify a connection between the purely mythological phase of the Hindu religiousness and the next phase. Such a speculative intervention could clarify what the passing of the Hindu religiousness was made like, from the Rigvedic epoque to the new epoque, that is conventionally delimited by Indologists through the "brahman" texts. In the "brahmana" period that was several centuries younger than Rigveda's hymns, the priest was consolidating, with an increasing determination and exclusiveness, his social primate, and he finally claimed to be honored like a "man-god". While the priesthood became a divine function, the mythology and the metaphysics contained in the "brahmana" texts continued the Rigvedic mythology and metaphysics, and it moved a few accents and it contrived a few new mythical figures, but it also received its significations in many aspects. The word "brahman" that yore meant magical power, the power of the prayer and of the sacrifice, it started designating the divine principle itself, out of which derived the world with all the creatures. The process which the idea of "brahman" crossed through, it was a long a complicated process, and it is mostly unknown to us. We often encounter symptoms regarding the increasing importance of the idea of "brahman" during this process. Behold some symptomatic aspects highlighting some tribulations of the idea of "brahman".

A peculiar fact often noticed is that, during the Rigvedic epoque, not only the man was committing ritual acts of magical sacrifice, when wanting to obtain something, but the gods do the same. The magical word, the ritual act, the sacrifice, they are reckoned – in other words – as greatly effective means which the gods as well resort to, especially on the eve of some big

undertakings or deeds. In other mythologies the gods are never put in the situation of bringing sacrifices in order to obtain the fulfillment of their desires. We are here, without any doubt, in front of a very characteristic trait of the Hindu mentality: this mentality was so imbued with the importance and the unfailing efficiency of the magical word, so that it placed the gods too in the condition of using that technique. Some "brahmana" texts inform us that the great God Prajapati, when intending to create the world, he proceeded, similarly, to bring some sacrifices in order to assure the full success of his undertaking. But details confirming the increasing importance of the idea of "brahman" we could quote at will, for there are plenty of them. We mention, in the same ideas order, also the next detail. According to several "brahmana" text, because of being the gods themselves creatures, they have not been existing from eternity, and therefore they neither are endowed with the faculty of immortality. The gods gain their immortality exclusively through some ritualic acts, which they submit themselves to, throughs sacrifices, namely on magical way. The power of the prayer, the power of the sacrifice, it exceeds the power of the gods; the magic means an increase, an adding to the gods' power. All these examples and as many examples as one can find, they actually indicate equally numerous moments which the transformation of the magical power ("brahman") in supreme principle was prepared through. We ascertain, therefore, from the Rigvedic hymns to the "brahmana" texts, a ceaseless promotion in metaphysical rank, of the *magical power*, so that, on a given moment, this magical power enjoyed a central position. We doubt that one could find in another culture such a grave metamorphosis of the idea of magic, in connection, of course, to perseverant preoccupations of mythological, metaphysical, and religious preoccupations. Between the Rigvedic epoque and the epoque of the "brahmana" texts it was affirmed a religiousness which the sentiment of the magical appeared as very elevated mythologically, and it did not illustrate by that, classically, which transformation the idea of magical must have crossed through, in order to become a component of the religious feeling. A famous theoretician of the religious life pleaded – two decades ago -, using very seductive arguments, in favor of the thesis that the nucleus of the religious life would be always and everywhere the irrational sentiment of the "sacred". In the philosophy of the religion proposed by this theoretician, the sacred is confounded, too much so, to the magical. As far as we are concerned, we are going to show that the magical element does not enter any religion tale-quale, with its original signification. In any religion the magical element appears valued only after experiencing a sublimation and an intertwining with other elements of mythical and

metaphysical nature. Without such valuing and composition, the sentiment of the magical (of the sacred) will never give by itself a truly religious phenomenon. But we are going to talk about this in a separate chapter.

Comparing the European religious life and the religious beginnings of the Hindu spirit as proved by documents, we are compelled to take in account very numerous differences. Behold why, intending to approximate the religious phenomenon, it seems very inappropriate to us to start from the feelings constituted within our soul of European citizens, because of being too exposed to see everything in an alteration dictated by our subjectivity. Therefore, we need the opposite, namely to research what the religious phenomenon is constituted like, in as diverse as possible human regions. It may be that the religion will be revealed to us as the most complex spiritual phenomenon, containing all kinds of components: mythological, magical, metaphysical, and ethical. This intertwining of various factors it should suffice by itself, to nuance the religious phenomenon differently, each time. Not to mention that, besides the variety of motives and substances which are always mixed in the religious phenomenon, there are also other factors determining more imponderable variations, but which are, nevertheless, equally real. Let's not forget that the religious phenomenon, as any other creator manifestation of the human spirit, it presents as well, particular aspects of *style*. One of the main tasks which we take upon us, it is right that of highlighting the *unavoidable stylistic* structure of the religious phenomenon. From this point of view, the Hindu religiousness offers us wonderful analysis occasions.

In the whole unfolding of the religious, mythological, meta-physical thinking of Hindu, one remarks a tendency of overcoming the diversity of the deeds and of anchoring into a hidden unity of metaphysical nature. This tendency has been remarked by both European and Hindu researchers since ancient times, when the Hindu were in full unfolding of their spiritual powers. The metaphysical truth had, for the Hindu mentality, a significance of diffuse unity that exceeded any particular form. The fact that the metaphysical truth was searched for on the line of a diffuse unity, it was not due, by any means, to a claimed human intuition in miraculous correspondence with the hidings of the reality, as the Hindu thinkers themselves thought, but, in the first place, to some tendencies of style, or to some unconscious structures of their spirit. The direction which the so-called "metaphysical truths" on searched for on, it was dictated by the abyssal inclinations of the human spirit. Such a stylistic tendency was manifested right in the beginning in the Hindu spirituality, namely during the Rigvedic period. We kindly draw reader's attention that one of

these stylistic tendencies, whose holy slavery the Hindu spirituality grew up in, towards all horizons, it is the aspiration towards "*elementary*". The Hindu mentality attempts to explain the hidden of the phenomena by lending to it an elementary, of-natural-elements countenance. The Hindu mentality has an obvious shyness towards the particular and typified forms. Take heed at all the deities of the Hindu mythology and you will notice a thing: they are rather lack-of-form deities than of the precise forms. Indra, for instance, he is a god of the storm and of the war, and he is reckoned as a giant exceeding all world's templates. Agni, the god of the fire, another example, he conquers his dominant place he owns in the Rigvedic mythology, not only as tutelary god of the familial hearth, of the household goods, but also because the fire is a natural-like phenomena through its countenance. The inconsistency, the flickering, the lack-of-form of the fire, it meets right this tendency towards elementary, that is characteristic to the Hindu imagination. This thing is true, but why Agni, the god of the fire occupies such an important place right in the Hindu mythology? The answer to this very justified question can be given us only by the study of the most recent stylistic tendencies of the Hindu imagination and spirit. In the Hindu mythology the multiform fire, as natural element, it is divinized and it achieves its particular accent and its prominence, necessarily due to its lack of precise shape. If we will take in account the stylistic inclinations of the Hindus, we will star understanding even more still unclarified aspects of the Hindu religiousness and thinking. We highlighted, for instance, the very important place occupied in the Hindu mythology by the magical power of the prayer ("brahman") that power divinized by the mythological imagination, at one time, in the character named Brahmanaspati. It will be granted to us that one cannot even imagine something more lacking of any form, more beyond any countenance, than the "magical power" is. The Hindu thinking, by following, therefore, the tendency inscribed in its secret anatomy, towards elementary, it found the idea of magical power in the vast patrimony of the folkloric beliefs, it stops nigh to it, it cultivates it, it transforms it in divinity when the mythology is in a flourishing spree, and it finally transforms it right in the supreme principle of the existence, when the speculative ideation was unchained with the whole energy. But why all of these? Of course, among others, also for the magical power by its natural-element-like quality, from beyond any form, it wonderfully matched one of the most intimate stylistic aspirations of the Hindu spirit. Another example that we have at hand in order us to illustrate the same particularity of the Hindu spirit is, God Vishnu who, in Rigvedic mythology did not enjoy yet a too full of ardor

worshipping. In time, though, and through a process that took centuries, this character made an extraordinary career, advancing all the way to the center of the Hindu mythology. We are not going to overlook the characteristic detail that Vishnu too is a being beyond any forms, the multiform god whom all forms are born out of. Thus, in all circumstances, a staunch inclination towards elementary makes the Hindu imagination not to see the "*divine*" in forms as such, neither in the individualized forms, nor in those forms harmoniously typified, but always beyond forms. The inclination towards elementary has as consequence the depreciation of the forms. The forms are rather reckoned as symptoms of certain recognition of the *derived* world, and not as symptoms of the divine. This tendency towards elementary is one of the main motives why in Hindu mythology become centrals some gods as there are those of the storm, of the war, of the fire, of the magical power, gods who, without any exception, sure about their amorphous substance, the defy any fixed countenance. Here is not lacking of interest us to stop upon another phenomenon too, one revealed by an Indologist like Max Müller revealed somewhen as a particularity specially of the later Rigvedic religiousness. It is about a strange instability of the attributes which the man endows the gods with. A certain god, whom the man happened to address to, that god is shown as he would have features belonging to other gods too. In the eyes of the common mortal who appeals in his prayer a certain god, that god become some sort of cumulation of attributes which belong to other gods too. The god is invoked for several times, by the mortal, like there were no other gods, as the invoked god has all the divine attributes by and large. This rather paradoxical behavior of the religious man was most often reckoned as an intermediary state between polytheism and monotheism, and the corresponding faith was called as "henotheism". The problem of the henotheism, put this way, it seems to us like a little altered by the evolutionism view point. The fact is, anyway, that at Hindu the behavior which we are referring to, we must not reckon it as an element of crossing, as an intermediary phase between polytheism and monotheism, in the sense of the evolutionist theories, because at the Rigvedic man the discussed phenomenon it becomes quite clear through the profound stylistic tendencies characterizing the spirit of this people. Right at the beginning, the gods of the Hindu mythology were not quite individualities, in the full meaning of the word, and they did not represent typified forms either; they were rather "natural-elements"-like of a pronounced impersonal character. That is why, features and deeds of some of the gods can be attributed so facile to other gods, and that is why, by and large, a god can so easily replace other gods. By proceeding here to a first

recapitulation, we understand what in the Rigvedic phase like, a certain stylistic tendency that had remained as a permanent factor of the Hindu spirituality, it prevents the creation of a mythology having ideal gods as archetypes of harmony, and it favors the creation of a mythology populated by gods having diffuse personalities, by deform or above-forms gods, or by gods which are equally numerous cosmic giants. During the same Rigvedic epoque, at least in its later phase, the same tendency towards the impersonal elementary facilitates enormously the apparition of that henotheistic religiousness, to whom a god holds the place for all the other gods as the "person" had not importance at all.

It is as natural as one can get, after the things he have been showing until now, that the tendency towards elementary, this abyssal category of the Hindu spirit, once set in work, to gain in vigor and to become ever more obvious in its manifestations and fruits. The tendency towards elementary, having by excellence a stylistic nature, it belongs to the collective unconscious, regional or ethnical, as a deep function imprinting its seal on the spiritual creations. At Hindus, the natural-elements-like tendency is declared with much violence. That will lead, finally, to searching for an ultimate cosmic and absolute natural-element, and this especially when spiritual preoccupations take an obvious speculative orientation. The Indologist divide the oldest history of the Hindu spirit in three époques: the Rigvedic epoque, the "brahmana" epoque, and the Upanishads' epoque. The tendency towards elementary increased along these three époques. We know also that diverse Indologists attempted to highlight a motif, or another which they to highlight through, the continuity of the spiritual life of the Hindus during the Rigvedic, brahmana, and Upanishads' époques. In reality, they were not able to find any raw and palpable reason, which to undeniably provide this continuity. Not even the concept of "brahman", which meant at the beginning the magical power of the prayer, and later became the god-priest Brahmanaspati, and later on he became Brahman, the divine and unique principle of the existence, not even that can be reckoned as such an element of continuity and connection among the mentioned époques. All Indologists' attempts to specify the reasons of continuity of the Hindu spirituality failed. And still the continuity exists. The attempt of the Indologists to articulate it failed, because the continuity which we are talking about, it was searched for, too much, in certain substantial reasons which were somewhat palpable. But the continuity of the Hindu spirit is not made of such reasons. Regardless how much we would search, not a single more essential mythological motif lasts from the Rigvedic epoque at least until the *Upanishads'*

period, and even less until the period of the great systems. We admit that one of these motifs, as there is the idea of the reincarnation (Samsara) it is saved as a very persevering thread, through all the happenings of the times, but this motif is absent right in the Rigvedic age. Another motif persevering through all époques, it is, of course, that of the magical power (brahman): this motif changes, becomes more subtle, becomes central, and, in the end endures big diminutions. The philosophical speculation pushes, at a given moment, in the area of the common interest, especially the abstract motif od the "Self", of Atman (which means, initially, "breath"). About Atman they philosophized, in India, with an ascetic obstinacy and for centuries, but this philosophical concept is totally stranger to the Rigvedic epoque. And that means that any attempt to connect the diverse periods of the Hindu spirituality on the ground of "motifs", it fails from start. Under another report, a continuity that is not conditioned by motifs, there still exist. The continuity of the spiritual life in India is base, though, on more imponderable factors, and not on raw motifs. The continuity is achieved manifestly through some of the stylistic tendencies of the Hindu spirit. It was ascertained thus, that the tendency towards elementary, for instance, it is permanently active. Due to this creator function, the Hindus have ceaselessly been in searching for the impersonal natural-elements from beyond the concrete forms. Due to the same factor, it is explained the relative indifference of the Hindus towards what personally belongs to a god or another, and also the arbitrary transfer of the features and of the feats of a god on upon another god. Now we understand also why the concept of the magical power, uncertain and situated beyond any concrete forms, it was able to obtain and ever more preponderant metaphysical role, due right to his formal inconsistency. During the brahmana's epoque, it was affirmed that Prajapati, the god who created the world, it was the magical sacrifice itself; and a little later on, it was argued that the divine principle of the existence was Brahman. It was about the same brahman who was, in the beginning, only the word of magical efficiency, the apanage of only the priests, and a very successful weapon in hands of the priests. Some researches attempted to explain this odd advancing of the idea of magic (of Brahman) all the way up to the metaphysical stages, by the fact that the priests intendedly forced such an evolution, by using their totally exceptional situation they had in the Hindu society. But such a hypothesis is very unlikely. The spiritual phenomena of such nature are never explained by social circumstances. The explanations of such sort unfortunately remain outside the phenomenon which they want to explain. Wanting to explain the apparition of the metaphysics of Brahman through the position of

the priest in India, it will mean not understanding almost anything of the profoundness of the history's essential phenomena. Actually, the two phenomena we treat about, the social one and the spiritual one, they correspond to one another, they equally being the expression of the more profound state that stays to both of them, at their bases. We have a clear opinion in this regard. We have the belief that neither they would reach the central position of the priest in the social life of the Hindu, nor Brahman's metaphysics would be ever declares, if the spirit of this people was not dominated so powerfully by that specific tendency towards the natural elements which we have highlighted. The identification of the supreme principal to the magical power, and then to Brahman, and then the role of "divine-man" assumed by the priest as central; factor of the social life, they are – in other words- parallel phenomena. The priests, who administrate magical powers, they exist, in a way of another, at all primitive tribes, as also at nations claiming that they are no longer primitive. Still, nowhere like in India (brahmana phasis) the concept of "magical power" did not reach to be identified to the *ultimate, impersonal principle of the existence*, to the divine itself, neither the priest reached, anywhere else, to the same measure as in India (in the same "brahmana" phasis) to attribute himself a dignity as "man-god". During that epoque, the priest was not a simple representative of the divinity, or a simple mediator between people and God, but the priest was a cosmic factor very aware of his power in report with the divine. Among such a constellation of factors, and in such a spiritual climate, the religion constituted itself, in a totally special way, enough strange, in comparison to what we usually understand by the term of "religion". Here the religion was not a sentiment of the helpless creature facing an overwhelming divinity, but it rather was a sentiment not lacking a certain pride, conditioned by the conscience of an enough balanced report of forces, supposed to exist between man and divinity. The priest, owner of the ultimate magical secrets, he thought about himself as being able to regulate, through his ritual acts, the functioning of the cosmos itself. "The sun would not rise, if in the morning the sacrifice of the fire was not brought", we are told by a text of the "brahmana". To this conscience of the equilibrium that is supposed to exist between man and divinity, of course the common people participated as well.

The religiousness takes a new countenance in the epoque of the *Upanishads*, namely of the texts which later constituted the basis of all India's philosophical systems. The fundamental

idea of the Upanishads can be lapidary summarized with the words: "tat tvam asi[1]" ("this is you"). The sibylline formula was chosen in order to express the individual's identity as divine principle. With an increase in precision, the formula wants to say that the divine principle is within each individual, or that the individual soul is identical to the world's soul. One can ascertain an endless distillation of this idea in the texts of the Upanishads. Atman - meaning the "Self" - is placed in equation with Brahman, meaning God. The religiousness searches, of course, for fitting its being consequently. Before all, the religiousness comprised in Upanishads takes an ever more philosophical countenance, but without losing its character as feeling. But the religion no longer was, as it was before, founded on the sentiment of a report between man and another being, external to man, of divine nature, but it was founded on the report between man and a divine principle palpitating within himself the human being. The religiousness was transformed, with that, from a matter of relations among diverse existences, and it became a matter of *existential clarification* of the man. The man reckons himself as capable of existing – either as isolated individual, in himself and for himself, or as a deep "me", one identical in essence to the divine principle. Thus, the religiousness was configurated around a possible report between two degrees of existence, which the man is capable of, between two degrees of existence differing from one another by depth and horizon. In connection to the religious man characteristic to the Upanishadic spirit, all value and all norms which the man felt himself guided by, they are built differently, in a new perspective. The Upanishadic religiousness equaled, in the first place, to a deepened sentiment of the human existence. The man has the conviction of a possible advancing from living in the concrete world of the sensitive and material forms, to a feeling on the virtue of which the individual *self* feels himself identical to the divinity's universal self. The highest value which the Upanishadic man aspired to, it coincided to the existence unveiling itself as a confluence of Atman (the Self) with Brahman (God). Facing such a deepened, impersonal existence soaked with the conscience of the identify between man and God, beyond any forms, it was natural that this other existence to become a non-value. The perspective of "tat tvam asi" unbalanced the ensemble of the values as well. First of all, the whole this world of the senses, which we breathe and live in, it experiences a slow degradation. The man was called to become what he essentially is: namely Brahman (God). The man's

[1] This is in the Romanian source text a transliteration from Hindu, based on what the original Hindu words sound like. (E. l. t.'s n.)

deepening within the new perspective all the way to the identification to Brahman, it followed to be achieved in a conscious mode, for the identify given in the first place, it was a conscience fact, and it was even less a center of the conscience. Concomitantly to the deepening of the conscience all the way to the conscious, lucid confluence of the man with God, the concrete world of the senses and all the preoccupations directly related to it, they fell on a 'non-values" plan. In that phasis of the Hindu religiousness one could not affirm, though, the fact that the senses' world, this seen, heard, and touched world, it would he an unreal world. No, the concrete world was real, namely it was a secondary product of Brahman, but it did not represent a sum of values, because of having a depreciated aura. Only the lucid existence of the man into identity to Brahman, it was still enjoying a really positive appreciation.

We have to tarry a little also on another idea granted in the religious life of the Hindu with a totally exceptional interest. We are referring ourselves to the idea of the reincarnation of the soul (called by Hindu as "Samsara"). To the Hindu religiousness, the myth of the reincarnations represents a more steadfast element than even the idea of Divinity. According to the Hindu belief, the reincarnation of the human soul takes place either in a superior being, or in an inferior being, and the sort of reincarnation seems to be determined by the kind of deeds somebody committed during life. The Europeans provided the reincarnation's myth with an exclusively ethical-justiciary interpretation. We are going to see, though, that we have not to understand the sort of the reincarnation as necessarily and entirely as a punishment or as a reward for the deeds the man committed during life. It seems that the reincarnation myth is susceptible of an interpretation that passes beyond it purely ethical-justiciary signification. More precisely: our impression is that the ethical-justiciary signification of the incarnation myth gets complicated also with a magical meaning. We think that we have serious reasons to argue this fact, despite the fact that its interpreters until now avoided to confer this myth such a meaning. In the oldest *Upanishads* we find an idea which we want to draw reader's head on, for it provides us with a suggestion among the most valuable ones, regarding the substrate of the conception about soul's reincarnation into a superior of inferior life. We are going to present here the idea comprised in those somewhat overlooked texts: the man's soul, by committing evil deeds, it becomes evil *through that*, and by committing good deeds, the man's soul becomes better *right by that*. At the first glance, this idea seems to be insignificant, but whether patiently weighted in, it provides us with a key. We are having to do here, no more no less, but with an inversing of the

current belief that the man does good deeds for he is good in his substance, or the man does evil deeds because of being evil in his substance. The Upanishadic idea which we have stopped ourselves at, it attributed to the deeds as such, a somewhat magical influence upon the soul's state; the man's soul would become alike the deeds the man commits. Transformed thus, the soul will be reincarnated in a superior or in an inferior being, according to the soul's degree of consummation. Far from us the intention of affirming that the idea of reincarnation is stranger to the thought of the justice that gratified and sanctions, but the conception on reincarnation gets unpredictably deepened when looked at also from a magical perspective, one that is at least indicated by some of the texts. The soul becomes "alike" his deeds, while still living his terrestrial life, so that at reincarnation the soul needs only to put up the coat of the body that will fit the soul. Only a few ideas from the history of the religions have this depth. We are highlighting it here carried away by our desire for granting it its due place in the researches following to be undertook on this subject matter.

The fact that we must not exaggerate with the justiciary interpretation of the myth comes out also from something else: according to the Hindu conception the reincarnation is not the highest good to be achieved; the supreme good rather consists of avoiding the incarnation. The incorporation of the soul into Brahman is preferred to the re-embodiment. Stopping the reincarnations appears to be an ideal, and this thing that is identical to salvation it cannot be achieved by deeds, regardless how good they be, but it can be achieved, in the first place, through "knowledge", through knowing the identity between man and God.

In all India's spiritual doctrines, the salvation has the signification of an emancipation of the man from under the domination of the law of the reincarnation. One always achieves the salvation through "the true knowledge". This is the central point of all doctrines from India, and of all convergencies and divergences of opinions. How comes that the Indians confer the "knowledge" (the science) such a decisive efficacity, a function of universal remedy, or of sovereign means destined to liberate the man even from under the law of the reincarnation? This exaltation of the efficacity of the cognitive powers stirs up especially our bewilderment, of the Europeans, who all of us remember the Apostle's words: I do the evil that I do not want, and I do not do the good I want. The Christian Apostle highlighted, with an awakened conscience, the uselessness of the knowledge, or of the simple knowledge, as salvation method. A tragical lucidity was driving him on the road of the faith and of the love. Still, how comes that in all

India's doctrines the conception about knowledge, as sovereign means for man's salvation, it is an unanimously admitted premise, almost an axiom of the spirit? The answer to this question, of course, is not provided to us by any Sanskrit text, for the analyzed thesis was to the Hindu mentality some kind of "evidence" of the spirit. This king of evidences always is the resound of a deeper spiritual structure. But if we place ourselves eccentrically from the pretended evidence, we will be able to hope to bring some clarifications upon the fact how the Hindu mentality was able to reach such evidence. We have just highlighted another idea, an idea contained by the oldest Upanishads, upon a conception remained in an embryo phase, one arguing that the soul becomes "alike" the deed committed by the human being. The good deeds will make the soul good, while the evil deeds will make the soul evil. I was saying that in this conception surely there sneaked in something from the cosmic magic, due to which a certain fact attracts as its consequence another *similar* fact. This rule of the magical thinking is archaic. The Upanishads thinkers must have still been under the influence of the magical thinking. If, on the magical way, the soul became alike his deeds, why the soul would not become, as well, alike his "*knowledge*", also on the way of an involved magic? The people were thinking so much in magical forms, so that a question like this one did not even occur, clearly, in their mind. Still, in this magical perspective we could find, without any doubt, the motives of the trust granted by Hindus to the "knowledge" as salvation means.

But in order to understand even better the importance granted by Hindus to the knowledge in all their doctrines on the salvation technique, we are advised to take heed to other circumstances as well. Let's not forget that in the Hindu philosophy the term knowledge is not limited to designate some exclusively theoretical orientations and preoccupations. The knowledge is to them rather identical to a process of existential clarification of the man, to a spirit's purification process, to an act of unearthing a deeper subjective existence. It is a tacit premise of the entire Hindu philosophy that one cannot enter the heart of object except by concomitantly purifying the subjective life. Therefore, the knowledge act, far from being strictly the result of some intellectual efforts, it appears like a slow and progressive substantial clarification of the soul. The original meaning of the word "clarify" is tied to the molten noble metal cleaned up of slag. The soul is guided to "clarify" himself, i.e. like the noble metal, because only thus the soul will be capable of the act of knowledge that places the soul in the presence of a supreme existence. The knowledge act is not only an abstract question of

intellectual correctitude, but it is as well a question of resonance of the divine substance as such. Thu, the knowledge act will become synonymous to salvation process.

All these aspects, naturally, they attract after them most unusual consequences. Thus, for instance, at Hindu the knowledge act does not signify an individual exercise of the thinkers. The true knowledge act is never reckoned as an individual act belonging to one or to another among thinkers, and the ideas which a thinker reached by his own, ideas bearing the seal of the singularity, they will not enjoy too much trust. In other words, the knowledge act has at Hindus a much more impersonal character than at the European thinkers. A thinker who has not been previously, slowly, and gradually initiated, by actively participating to clarification efforts, by a teacher, or by a master, that thinker cannot aspire to a total respect. The knowledge act is not the product of the individual proud of his originality and always driven towards inedited, as in the case of the European thinkers. In order to become worthy of the epithets which they aspire to, the knowledge act must have a genealogical tree, to say it so. The true knowledge act is always integrated on a line that comes from the past and passes towards the future, and it is somehow detached from a collaboration among generations. Such a situation is not identical, though, to remaining on the same spot, to a stagnation in the green waters of a dogmatizing tradition. It will suffice to remember that have been counted, in India – if we remember that correctly – around 350 philosophical systems of a very diverse countenance. One cannot, by any means, accuse the Hindu philosophy of scarcity of ideas, but the ideas grew up and got amplified, they got thinned and they got clarified, due to an intense collaboration within the frame of the schools and currents. It is easy to understand that the too original thinkers' extravagances will be repudiated, but such extravagances not quite occur just because of that reason. There are not, in India, individualistic thinkers, but there are only thinkers aligned to a common effort. The individual genius cuts off his haughtiness and he placed himself in the service of an idea, honoring the though in the first place, and not the individual genius. This is a situation to be taken as it is, namely neither to be praised nor to be blamed. We are going to avoid confounding this situation to the enslavement of the philosophical thinking to a dogmatically constitute body of theses, as it happened in the medieval Europe, when the philosophy was complacent to play the role of theology's housemaid. The Western Europe, by categorically leaning towards individualism, it sometimes has also violent anti-individualistic reactions. The Western history experiences extreme phases, either as choking up any individual liberty or of individualistic excesses. In

India such phenomena do not quite exist, because in India the thinker is, by the whole his kind, more impersonal; originality ambitions appear to be organically attenuated; the thinker is not tormented by his ambition to be original at any cost, but neither is him terrorized by the fear of falling into heresy. The too individualistic thinking, and often too highlighted, has led Europe to excessively theorizing, so that the life often legged behind the knowledge's conquests. In India the knowledge does not reach such impasses, for in India the knowledge act is the product of the spiritual life in its wholeness, namely the product of a spiritual life strongly tied to more public forms.

Within the frame of these preoccupations which tend to highlight a religious phenomenon, it occurs a bewilderment. The doctrine that is comprised in *Upanishads*, together with its consequences, could they any longer be reckoned as a religious phenomenon since the knowledge has become here a first rank preoccupation? Is not this doctrine, in the first place, a "philosophy"? In searching for an answer, we are forced again to leave the standpoint which are natural to us, as Europeans. There is no doubt that the science (the knowledge), as function of the human spirit, it was often developed for itself, and that lead to philosophical and scientifical creations by excellence, as for instance at Greeks, and as in Europe during the last centuries. The knowledge eminently had a theoretical function, and when it happened not to have this function, as for instance during the Middle Age, the knowledge was arbitrarily and forcedly subordinated to a certain doctrinal body of religious nature. In the last case, the knowledge's function was only that of serving a fully crystalized theology. In Europe the knowledge was either a slave of free. Totally different is the knowledge's position in the Upanishadic spirituality. The knowledge, without being enslaved to a body of fully established theological theses, it possessed from the beginning, a very natural religious function, having an obvious creator guidance. To the knowledge is attributed, no more no less, but the function of achieving the "salvation", of accomplishing a religious state, for the salvation consists of consciously accomplishing the identify between man and God. The knowledge's purpose is not the theory, as in Greece or in the modern Europe since Renaissance, but the purpose of the knowledge it the creation of a religious state, and the religious state is to the Upanishadic spirit equal to man's salvation itself. It would be a mistake to reckon the Upanishadic phenomenon as a peripheral moment coming out of knowledge acts. The religiousness is not in Upanishads a simple philosophy's epiphenomenon.

The religious phenomenon occurs as s central fact, and the knowledge is the most important means which the religious phenomenon is accomplished through.

In Upanishads one finds the emanation hearth of all ideas, around which were confirmed India's thinking systems and religious doctrines. An exposition of these ones, regardless how great is the interest they arise from philosophical standpoint, it lays totally outside the subject which we are taking heed at. Our researches regarding the religious phenomenon are guided by considerations having incidence point aiming only with the philosophical systems. We are going to pay attention to the systems in question only when they offer us a pretext for fruitful analysis or a welcome occasion to enrich our thoughts regarding the religious phenomenon. We are going to tarry for a little while upon Buddhism, for Buddhism represents, in its unaltered form, a paradoxical religious phenomenon; paradoxical because it lacks the idea of divinity. Buddha († 480 A.D.) is usually known, together with Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed, as one among the few great religion founders. The biographical legend undressed of anything the imagination invented about Buddha, it attributed to Buddha a descendance from a noble a rich family from the feet of Himalayan Mountains. In searching for salvation, he leaves the luxury of his parental house, his family, his country, in order to proceed through the world as a beggar, as a citizen of the "non-country". After his enlightenment, Buddha started preaching his new doctrine having as guiding ideas: the man's terrestrial existence is partaker to the pain, and that because of a multitude of reasons depending on the constitution itself of the human being and of the surrounding world. It is though clear, according to Buddha's teaching, that there is possible an escape from sufferance, of a salvation from the slavery of the pain. The Buddhism is as well, as all the other Hindu doctrines, is a doctrine of salvation. If to the Upanishadic spirit the man's salvation consists of a turning towards Brahman, in the conscious overflowing of the human individual into God, the Buddhism wants to be, in the first place, a method for liberation from the slavery of the pain, a method that anybody can impropriate up to the consummate victory. It is right that in *Upanishads* as well, the salvation is virtually given anticipatedly to anyone, due to the identify between the man's soul and God. By being a virtual state, the salvation has to be accomplished on the conscience's plan too, through knowledge, but just this knowledge is not too facile because of involving a perseverant clarification or purification of the human self. It is to be remarked that the postulate of the internal clarification has been increasingly radicalized as the history of the Hindu spirit has been progressing. One is required an ever more perseverant effort

in order to achieve the internal clarification, and that clarification has been reaching an ever more ascetic countenance. Ascesis, with its stages, it naturally supposes a previous withdrawal of the man from the world of the senses and from the horizon of all temptations. It is a known fact that the ascetic practice has severity degrees and that it reaches its extreme culmination in the yoga exercises. In comparison to what is proposed like, in the old *Upanishads* the ascetic postulate seems to be seriously highlighted in the Buddhist doctrine as well, but not so exaggeratedly as in Yoga. The older Upanishadic thinkers reckoned the world of the senses as a "nonvalue", and that in comparison to the supreme value, which was to represented to them by the existence of the man into Brahman. It is clear that the Upanishadic thinkers reached the depreciation of the sensitive world only in the light of the Brahmanical metaphysics which they were professing. The things appear to be different for Buddha. To Buddha the human existence in the world of the senses was not a simple nonvalue only in metaphysical perspective, but it was a real existence and totally penetrated by pain, and therefore a nonvalue. The pain as dimension of the human existence is something positive and not a simple question of metaphysical appreciation. The Upanishadic thinkers argued that the existence in the world of the senses it a nonvalue, because they weighed this human existence in the light of a deeper existence of the man, who feels himself identical to Brahman, to God, while Buddha did not believe in the existence of Brahman-God; thus, also his affirmation that the man's existence within world is totally and in everything "pain", it does not seem at all as a metaphysical assertion, but it wanted to be a first and fundamental ascertainment of a fact as such, a fact that cannot be attenuated by anything. The incipient point of the Buddhist doctrine is this positivism of the pain which one cannot come out from through metaphysical speculations. Buddha, by starting from the immediate data provided by the senses, and from a critical analysis of the concept of substance, he denied the existence of an eternal, invariable realm, suspected to be beyond any form. In Buddha's opinion there is only "becoming", "transformation", and "passing". The fluid aspect or the flowing inconsistency of the concrete data it was highlighted by Buddha with an incorruptible perspicacity, and with a strength which one cannot meet in the history of the thinking except at Heraclites at Greeks, and at Bergson in our times. So, Buddha denied any perennial substance, any unchangeable substance, which would stay beyond the ceaseless transformation - transformation perceived by us through our senses. Buddha went to far in his pleading undertook in favor of the ephemeral, so that he did not shy to doubt even the existence of God. This destructive offensive relentlessly

waged against one of the most rooted ideas of the human genius, it stopped in front of the sole spiritual good, namely in front of the reincarnation myth. Buddha though that he could incorporate the reincarnation myth to his doctrine. But Buddha provided even this myth with a sui generis interpretation, with his thesis on "becoming", as the unique reality accessible to the senses, and with his thesis regarding the existence of the "substance". One could understand that a "soul" as permanent *substance*, who to reincarnate in a string of lives, it would not have been admitted by Buddha, because of such a substance-soul does not exist, according to his opinion, as an indestructible constant, not even in our given life. Still, Buddha upheld that out of our given life are produces, after our life ends, other lives seeming a re-embodiment of a pretended soul, who would remain the same. Among these lives from the series of Samsara there is, though, according to Buddha's conception, there is only a causal connection, but not also a substantial identity, or a persistency of a pretended soul. The reincarnation is rather as a fire crossing from a house to another, serially, without being possible to say that one and the same substance of fire would consume the houses. The supreme purpose of the life remains, according to Buddha, actually to destroy the thirst for life, and by that preventing any reincarnation, because the life means always pain. In order us to know how must we or how could we save ourselves form the slavery of the pain, we are required to know, firstly, the causes of the pain, and Buddha finally reduced the causes of the pain to the beings' thirst for life, namely of the man as well. At its turn, this thirst for life is founded on a simple nescience, namely on the elementary nescience that all the things of this world are actually an illusion. Buddha's doctrine culminates in the idea that one can achieve the salvation by destroying the thirst for life, and one can destroy the thirst for life by knowing the truth, namely the totally illusory character of all the things. When the man annuls his thirst for life on the path of the knowledge, he will elevate himself to the state of consummation called Nirvana, and that man will cease to reincarnate. Nirvana is the last word of the Buddhism, as Brahman is the last word of the *Upanishads*. One could believe that by its practical positivism, by its interest guided towards saving the man from pain, by highlighting a righteous life, the Buddhism would represent rather an ethics and a technique of destroying the thirst for life, than being a religion. This impression has been often voiced, and it appears to be the more legitimate as the Buddhism amazes us also because of abolishing the idea of divinity. As far as we are concerned of it, we do not renounce, though, to reckon the Buddhism as religion. One will see that there are sufficient arguments for presenting the Buddhism as a

chapter of the religious life. One has to notice, firstly, that regardless what positivist the Buddhism would be like, the Buddhism discovered a little gate allowing to incorporate the mythological idea of reincarnation, and even the idea of gods and demons (admitted as temporary creations within the concrete world). Even more that that; in Buddhism the religious feeling preserves its virulence, at its turn, despite the ethicalism end even despite to the elimination of the idea of supreme divinity. The religious feeling is not absent in Buddhism but it only consists of other terms than in the other doctrines. The religiousness has its faces. The stylistic frames of the Hindu spirit provide us with enough elements in order us to understand the situation. The horizon of the Hindu spirit is infinite. It may be that this infinite horizon has not gushed up in any other human culture, in such an accentuated manner, as in the Hindu culture. We spoke some other time as well, about the unlimited spaces where the ventures of the Hindu gods are localized in, about the Hindu astronomical chronology, one that is complacent in periods of fantastic dimension and, generally, about the Hindu spirit's gigantomania (to be seen *The Genesis of the Metaphor and the Meaning of the Culture*). The myth of the countless reincarnations is not, in the last instance, else than the expression of this pathos of the infinite. Striking, and totally specific, it is the fact that the Hindus do not manifest an affirmation attitude towards their infinite horizon, neither they manifest the tendency of advancing into this horizon, but they rather manifest a tendency of denying all the deeds happening into the infinite horizon and they also manifest a tendency of *withdrawal* from that horizon. By following the thoughts' chain upon the religious phenomenon, we are interested – regarding the Hindu spirituality – especially in this curious attitude of withdrawal from the horizon. Even in the oldest literary documents we can find the ascesis as one of the preferred withdrawal forms. The ascesis is cherished more than any other way of life, and the ascetics become the object of a unanimous veneration, even to the extent of concurring the gods. Let's mention once more that in the Upanishadic teachings, the sensitive world, namely the whole filling up of the horizon, it is transformed in nonvalue. This depreciation is influenced by the same attitude towards horizon. The fact that is some systems of great amplitude as the Buddhist one (later on in Vedanta system as well) the senses' world is seen as a simple illusion, that fact only highlights the steadfast attitude towards horizon. Together with the tendency of withdrawal from horizon, we notice also another characteristic of the Hindu spirit. We have been insisting, in the previous assertions, upon the circumstance that the Hindus tend, on all the conceiving of their imagination and of

their thinking, towards *elementary*. When this tendency towards *elementary* is combined with the negative attitude towards horizon, they will reach most striking effects. By browsing the history of the Hindu spirit, we will notice that the elementary which the Hindu imagination and thinking aspire to, it seems to be ever emptier of this sensitive and concrete aspect. The spirit insistingly searched for the elementary, namely for the impersonal principle, but in the same time the spirit searches for increasingly emptying the elementary or the impersonal principle of any material-concrete content which would remind, in a way or another, about the sensitive world. The impersonal principle appears to be identified, one after another, to the magical power, then to the breathing, to the soul, and to the self. At the end of this ascension stays the "self" that is a factor that has rejected almost all determination, and that is an abstract, nude factor. Buddha took a step further towards totally emptying the impersonal principle of any palpable and positive content. The essence of the world and of the human existence is, according to Buddha, the "nothing", the "metaphysical void". Eith that, the process of emptying the principle has reached its final term. It has been necessary to present the spiritual process due to which it has been reached such a formula, because only thus one can understand the religious function fulfilled by the "metaphysical void" in Buddhism. The nothing, the void, they have in the Buddhist doctrine a religious function, for they keep the place for Brahman, for the Great Whole. The: "nothing" is substituted to a religious object and it achieved by that an aura. The "nothing" or the "nonexistence" is, according to the Buddhist conception, the supreme good which we can aspire to, exactly on that measure which the supreme good was Brahman-God. Nirvana is the inward experience of the metaphysical void, but the "void" has the aura of an object religiously desired. Nirvana is the "nothing" bearing a sacred aura. The "nothing' as metaphysical place which God-Brahman was evacuated from, it preserves, in Buddhism, its prestige and its divine aroma, as a cave, which you chase away the beast from, it will still preserve the scent of the beast. The nonexistence is not, in Buddhism, only a term devastated by negations, and thinned down to the pernicious form of the pure concepts; the nonexistence, through the role it has in the Buddhist life, it is rather the nothing keeping the place for the "Whole". The "nothing" substituted the divine "Whole". The nothing is the "divine Whole" emptied of any content, but as ab absolute vacuum the nothing is saturated with divine prestige. The Middle Age's naturalists spoke about a nature's shyness of void, about a "*horror vacui*". We could attribute to the Hindu spirit a tendency which we could call it as "*amor vacui*", the love for the void. This *amor vacui* fulfills,

though, a religious function. Nirvana must be understood as an object of a religious state. Thus, the religious phenomenon is constituted in Buddhism on the ground of a report between negative terms; the report is established between the man's *illusory existence* in the senses' world, on one side, and the *metaphysical void* that replaces the divine Whole, on the other side. In Buddhism the object of the existence and of the religious deepening is the identity of essence between the human existence and the metaphysical void. Only the subtlety of the Hindu spirit was able to accomplish the religious phenomenon on the ground of a report between purely negative notions.

In the present study we are going to insist, on every occasion which we will be provided with in with for fertile considerations, also upon the mystical variants of the religiousness. Given the terms which the Hindu religiousness is constituted by, one can affirm that nowhere the religiousness inclines, by itself its nature, towards crystallizations of eminent mystical nature, as in case of India. The purpose of the mystical religiousness is, as we know, the accomplishment of a state of union, of soulish merging of the man with the supreme principle. This principle cannot be but Brahman, an impersonal God as in *Upanishads*, or as in Vedanta, but likewise the "metaphysical void" or the "nonexistence" as in Buddhism, as also other "truths" too. The mystics themselves, but also the scientific researchers, they have an elective affinity with the mysticism, they usually present the mystical state as an ultimate religious ideal, one incomparable and impossible to be surpassed. Vener more than that, by being the mystical state reckoned by some of them as a very real union state of the man with the principle, it represents the ascension above any human conditions. As the mystical state would be a totally exceptional state, even above the historical relativeness of the human culture; as the mystical state would not even be a historical phenomenon, but it would be a trans-phenomenon, a phenomenon of man's divine contamination. Without denying the existence of some particular mystical states, we have decided among others, to show what erroneous is like, that opinion that wants to bring the mystical state out of the human order and conditions. Our conviction is that the mystical state, as well as the ideation which the mystical state is conditioned by, is fully participating to all the coordinated of the spiritual life. The mystical state does not transcend the human and the history but, on the opposite, through all its culture and configuration, the mystical state always bears the seal of the stylistic categories which are characteristic to the epoque, to the region, and to the person whom the mystical state occurs within. The mysticism appeared in the most divers cultures as a moment incorporated to these cultures, and not as a uniform and constant possibility

of the humanity. It is true that in the mystical state the man has the conscience of a confluence with the principle, but this conscious is actually an illusory one. The mystic, like individual, like place, whom the pretended contact with the Absolute is accomplished within, he is invaded by the overwhelming impression of a privileged state; from here comes the exclusivism of the mystic towards history and towards the world; from here comes the belief that he ascends above the human line. What illusory remains like this exalted conscience of the mystic it results, though, out of the impressive variety of the conceptions, of the methods, and especially of the styles which structure and configure the mystical state. Without any doubt, a mystic like the Chinese Lao-Tzi, and a mystic as the medieval European Meister Eckhart, they give us the impression of speaking about one and the same exceptional state. Then we not that there are some researchers, especially of theological formation, who insist upon showing that in the mystical states rather some pretended transcendences powers are manifested in, and not the man. If the mystic was really in such a contact with the transcendence, then the mysticism would represent a totally eccentric mode in comparison to the other spirit's manifestations. The study of the mystical states and doctrines, in the light of the cultural styles, it leads us to the conclusion that the mysticism actually participates to the man's contingencies and historic al modes. The mystical state is a creator state of the human spirit, which we grant the whole our interest to, btu we cannot agree the illusion which the mystic lives in regarding the value of the mystical state. The mysticism is a rarer apparition, by the method difficulties it implies: the mystical state is the symptom of an existence of rarissima intensity, but this does not mean that it able to leave behind the very structures related to herself/himself the human being. The mysticism is a potentiation of the human, but it is not a transcending. If the mystical state really was a state of confluence of the man with God, a coincidence, and identification, then of course that, before anything, it would not be configured according to stylistic templates. An attentive study reveals us, though, the obvious stylistic countenance of all mysticisms, which, from this perspective, they do not differ at all from the contrivances of the myth, of the art, or of the metaphysics. One must notice then the fact that the mysticisms, in strict sense of the word, they present also a rich differentiation even under their doctrinal content. Let's take a look at the Brahmanical and Buddhist mystiques: to the Brahmanical mystique the state of union of the man with the principle it takes place between individual and Brahman-God; to the Buddhist mystique the union takes place between individual and the metaphysical void.

We would highlight, for now, the stylistic aspects of the Hindu mystique, following later on to see what different is like the Hindu mystique from the other mystiques: Chinese, Neoplatonist, Christian, or Islamist.

Before characterizing the Hindu mystique there may be necessary a few words about the special technique for reaching the state of pretended merging of the spirit with the mystical object. This technique had been developed especially in India, and there especially in the yogic practices. Yoga is a philosophical system whose importance consists, though, rather of developing the ecstatic practices. It is a known fat that such yogic practices were adopted and developed by the adherents as well of other philosophical systems of India. Not system studies, though, the psychological conditions and phases of the mystical state, down to its ultimate subtlety, with the same thoroughness, as Yoga did, and no other system promoted with so much assertiveness the practice of ascesis, of concentration, of contemplation, and of deepening. What Yoga doctrine unveiled us regarding the suspension of the functions of the thinking matter, regarding the abstinence, regarding the spiritual cleanness, regarding the ascesis, the withdrawal of the senses from objects, regarding the fixing, the meditating, and the sinking into the supreme truth, it enormously exceeds any psychological endeavor or any European. We are mentioning here, for them who are totally stranger from the object of the present discussion, that the yogic procedures, the exercises, even the preparatory ones, are able to produce the profoundest changes into the human soul, and even some state which him who do not actually practices Yoga will not be able to even suspect. This is because of not being a poorer human imagination than just that regarding psychological questions. Yoga enriches de facto and it widens the human psychology. The Yoga technique justified us to speak about the psychological experiment, in the absolute sense of the word, unlike in Europe where, until now, unfortunately, the experiment has been intervening only in the matter's domain. Of course, such experimentation belonging to the psychological domain, whom the Yoga technique is dedicated to, it is not done haphazardly and neither only for transforming the human soul in a laboratory. No: the yogic experimentation is guided to a precise sense and on a lengthily tried road. Yoga's final term is the creation of the ecstasy phenomenon, of sinking into object, of merging with the claimed truth. Due to the yogic experiments, India has the occasion to know psychic and spiritual: aspects, states, and processes, which the European it uncapable of or totally stranger to. As a matter of fact, the European psychology, both theoretically and regarding its results, it must seem to the Hindus as in and

unimaginable state of embryo and naiveness. The science founded on the natural experiment made possible to the European to conquer the world on material and expansive plan. On the opposite, the Hindu, by dedicating himself to psychological experiment, he defeats the world on spiritual plan, by withdrawing himself from within world. It could be equally justified to accuse Europe of an excess of material technique, as India could be accused of excessive forms of psychic techniques. The yogic experiments care producers of exceptional psychic and spiritual states. To the average psychology of the European, such experiments could have disastrous effects, especially when not submitted to a severe control. Rightly so, until one reaches the so-=called state of union with the divine object, the yogic technique causes state representing as many psychic shifts which, when not voluntarily kept under control, they seem to equal a mental dissolution. Under the influence of the yogic exercises, not once seem the usual psychic states as experiencing a deterioration and decomposition, in the likeness of the white light split into the rainbow's colors. It is a known fact that the purpose of the material experiment is not only that of knowing some realities, but also to produce new facts in consciously created conditions. The yogic experiments, as their turn, they do not have only a cognitive finality, for they aim, in the first place, to produce the state of supreme union between the human subject and the divine object, states which are not accessible to the layman. These states are singular, and reaching them is the fruit of a methodical and voluntary exercise, an exercise guided towards a wanted result, according to some lengthily tried precepts. A researcher of the religious life, in the absence of such experiments of enlarging his conscience, he will toil all the way up to the edge of the phenomenon, where he suddenly finds himself alone, as a simple intrigued but forbidden spectator. Facing the inedited, the suspicions and the suppositions will enter the game. The mentioned phenomena, regardless what strange they will be us like, they still consist of terms of human psychology. No matter how unusual are be the ecstatic states and the preliminary phases, they will not remain totally opaque to us, for the yogis confess to us in an allusive manner and by using rich references to everyday states. The analogies, without reaching the substance, they will still allow us to guess, even if like through an opaques glass, the described states. The state of the union between the human subject with the divine object, namely the mystical state, it will be the arduous result of some very complicated internal processes. The mystical state as product of the yogic technique is a "precipitate-state", one obtained as in some sort of psychic-spiritual laboratory. Nowhere else the mystical state is presented as a result of a more arduous, more

radical, more alembicated process, as it is in India. The Hindus reached this sort of mysticism for they understand the mystical state, obviously, as a *permanent* state, as the true legitimate state of the man, in comparison to which the life in the world of the senses is but degradation, perversion, nonvalue, and a grave illusion. The permanence of the union state, of identification of the man to the Principle, it seems to us as a desiderate specific to the Hindu spirit, and only to the Hindu spirit. From there comes also the much more serious and more intense effort, the more intricate methods, and the more radical technique, which the Hindus resort to in order to achieve the mystical state. The Hindus aspire to the mystical state not as to an "exceptional" moment of beatitude, but in the form of a maximum permanence. The continuity of the mystical state which the Hindus aspire to, regardless the extent such continuity would be achieved to, it is not and ideal to them but it is something virtually given. The total withdrawal from the horizon of the given world is the path of the achievement. The virtual *permanence* of the "mystical state", on the ground of a metaphysical legitimacy, and the total withdrawal from the horizon of the given world: behold the essential particularities of the discussed mystique, which we could not understand without the stylistic aspects and tendencies inherent to the Hindu spirit.

Tao

That researcher who wanted to briefly characterize the Chinese spirit, he would find in the word "Tao" a summarizing vocable. We are about to undertake a trip in a region that is very strange to the European mentality, but that is also profoundly different also from the Hindu spirit. China's spirit denies our understanding, and it actually resists even more seriously an exterior understanding than the India's spirit does. It is clear that the difficulties require matching efforts. Who will not experience a feeling of mute desperation as well as denied curiosity in front of the gates? Him who tries to decipher the Chinese spirit is asked an almost total self-rejection, an exodus out of his memories about what he used to be. Naturally, it is not difficult to issue sentences right from the beginning, on the Chinese culture, if you stubbornly want to undertake the superficial operation of applying to the Chinese culture European criteria. But such an enterprise would show limitation, if not stupidity. We reject the assessments done in the light of the values which are natural to us the Europeans – so that we do not want to reach that. The

millennials culture of Chines it appears to a generous look as an apart world, one that claim to be judged, immanently, according to those criteria which, consciously or not, they were active in themselves the processes its creation. When the question is worded in such terms, the task of overcoming the difficulties lays exclusively with us, though we realize that such difficulties will never be totally removed. Therefore, we are required to adjust our perspectives and our lenses in the configurations matching the landscape. A certain elasticity degree of conscience will allow us to face the problem, to some extent. What subjective we the Europeans are like, when studying the foreign cultures, it is shown when speaking about the so-called deficiencies of the foreign cultures. In order to provide the reader with an example, we are mentioning here the reproach usually uttered, end even in book presenting the history of the Chinese philosophy, that the Chinese spirit have never been able to coagulate great systems of thinking. To some extent, this reproach seems to the right for it contains an ascertainment; but the ascertainment that in China has not been created great philosophical systems it necessarily accompanied by a judgment which the European subjectivism gushed up in: “Poor Chinese, they have no systematical mind, they have not constructive logics! They are poorly endowed from philosophical perspective! Their thinking if fragmentary! Aphoristic! Poor Chinese!” But why the European does not once take his time to occupy himself - thoroughly, and by mobilizing all his sympathetic powers – with a Chinese aphorism”? If the European did that, he would see then the fact that the Chinese aphorism, so miniscule as it is, it contains more than the European aphoristic does. The Chinese “aphorism” holds, by its kind, by its transparence and by its shadows, the place of the “whole”; the Chinese aphorism is the miraculous equivalent of a “system”; while the European aphoristic always contains something fragmentary, truncated. The objection brought to the Chinese spirit that is has not been capable of creating systems, it can be easily overthrown from the Chinese standpoint. A Chinese could answer: one aphorism of ours sometimes is more than a European system. As long as we do not get rid of our European subjectivism which I have illustrated by the previous example selected out of the numerous examples one can cite, the risks remain only on our side. Highlighting a certain aspect of a foreign culture only in comparison to and aspect of the same order of our culture as our criteria would be an absolute benchmark, it will be at least naïve. Let’s turn back for a little more to the objection we deigned to address to the Chinese spirit, why would we not wonder if the Chinese philosophical thinking has, from its point of view, very serious reasons to avoid, either lucidly or instinctively, the systematic ample

developments? It could very easily be that the system is not *ideal* for the Chinese. On the opposite – the systematization could be perceived by the Chinese as a vice of the European and Hindu thinking. Upon the metaphysic of a great finesse, characteristic to the Chinese who thinks, the Europeans systems have to produce the quite embarrassing and terrifying impression of some antediluvians monsters. The lack of systems, with their function and signification which they are granted with in Europe, is it, in China, the symptom of a congenital helplessness, or rather it is the sign of a disinterest determined by different spiritual tendencies? Putting the question this way it equals to an answer. The Chinese spirit is dominated by its own force-lines, by its own values, and that means at least being picky to hope that you can comprise it in the light of a claimed values which are to the spirit they refer to right some countervalues. When we want to approximate a foreign culture as there is the Chinese culture, we owe to let it present itself in front of us according to its intrinsic norms.

We do not doubt that our readers might haphazardly have come across at least with some reproductions of Chinese art. Especially sketches, drawings, or paintings. An image, regardless how approximate, concerning this art, it is enough for now to serve as support to some useful assertions. We draw reader's attention upon some stylistic particularities of the Chinese art. It has been noticed, of course, the fact that the Chinese painting is characterized, in the first place, by a different mode of treating the space than the way the space is treated by the painting which we are accustomed to. The problematic of the perspective is put totally different by the Chinese painting than by the European painting. In the European painting the landscape is comprised by the painter within the rays of his sight, from a sole point open over an infinite horizon. The painter organizes in details and placed the vision of the landscape within the lines emanating from a sole point, from that point where the seer himself is motionlessly situated. The looker thinks he is able to comprise, from the point where he has placed himself, with a consistent unfolding of his sight, the infinite. One can feel the painter in his unique and motionless position as an organizer center of all horizons. The Chinese painter does not imagine the same things about himself. He accommodates himself – to say so – in the horizon, by successively changing his position. He represents a part of the landscape, then he sets himself in movement, he takes another position in space and from there he represents another part of the landscape, so that the space is gradually organized around one looker who intermittently leaves his watching point. The general space is composed by circles which juxtapose to one another and they interpenetrate with

one another, without being organized from a sole center of the perspective. The space id distributes around a plurality of perspective centers, and in depth the space appears rather as a layered overlap of plans. The looker wanders, and he stops himself to rest every now and then; he slowly wanders the space in length and in width and in depth. With that the space impropriates a particular structure as it would be composed of "circles" which intersect with one another indefinitely, namely without precise edges. It is here about an alveolar indefinite space, which you will not ever be able to totally comprise it from a sole standpoint, and which forces you to walk around in order to get in contact with it. Our observations regard an imaginary space having to the Chinese spirit a categorial function. This spatial structure influences the whole way of being of the Chinese spirit. Other particular traits of the Chinese painting that one can know for they are useful for some important analyses, we can find them summarized in what was called as "The Chinese Impressionism". Banal and to some extent improperly said, we ascertain in the Chinese painting a perseverant tendency towards fixing an impression, a moment, as cut off from nature and life. In drawings, which are unmatched in their finesse, the Chinese painting limits itself to represent some lines of geological landscape, or a bunch of shivering reeds as by a premonition, or a bird in somnambulic flight, or a golden fish in the water, or a tree pushed by a restless wind, of a house sheltered by a divine vegetation, all of these fixed by using means of a monosyllabic simplicity. It is here the same impressionism that can be remarked also in the Chinese lyrical poetry. We are not going to lose from sight that this undeniable impressionism was often compared to the European impressionism from the XIX Century. The totally unjustified comparison took place, of course, due to the blessed cause that the European impressionists felt attracted to the Chinese impressionism. But that does not impede the Chinese impressionism to belong to a totally differently oriented spirit and to a totally different world. For instance, taking the art of the French painter Monet, you can notice at him too, necessarily, a desire – even a confessed one – to fix on the canvas an immediate impression, one unaltered by anything in its ephemeral fragility, a singular and incomparable moment in its relativity. The impression loved by these French impressionists it is, though, a retinal one. The color is understood as fragile hypostasis of the changing world, and the moment is full of reflexes of the surrounding world. The fickleness of the pulverizing processes, the ceaseless and undefined transformation, the physical moment, the atomized time, the fluidity of the things, behold the objective of the European impressionism. Such impressionism is the artistic answer given to

himself by the man who is souly disaggregated, the man of the decadence, of the end of the century, one who clings himself with a last effort and with elegiacal voluptuousness to the sole existence which he still believes in: the moment. Totally different is the moment which the Chinese impressionism tarries around calmly and imperturbably. This time the moment is loaded by a metaphysical charge. The moment is a strange showing of the eternity. The moment has the karats of the eternity. Beyond the sketch, beyond the temporary, of the haphazard, we intuit the cosmic mystery and order from ever. The detail is prolonged in the Whole. The Whole is confessed in detail. The temporary detail is sing of the great meaning, that exceeds us, as to the fortune tells in the palm of your hand, the line of your palm of an arabesque of your skin is a sign of a destiny. The Chinese impressionism is therefore, in essence, a divinatory impressionism that chooses and picks up the moment, only because the moment is an expression of the metaphysical meaning of the world, of a non-formulated but intuited meaning. The fragility, the tenderness, and the ephemeral are to the Chinese soul the accessible face of a deep, total, and above-time mystery. In this solidarity of the moment with the eternity it originated the simple greatness of the Chinese art, in comparison to which the works of the European impressionism cannot appear but peripheral and pitiful. The European impressionism, a decadent mode lacking its depth and naked of metaphysical sensitivity, it indulged itself, without profound resonances, among the unretouched accidental forms which it records with a passive voluptuousness. Behold epithets, cruelly pejorative, which the Chinese art distanced itself from, no matter what impressionist would be like. The shapes of the creatures and of the things, touched by a reflection of the eternity, appear in the Chinese art as used accordingly. The presence of the meaning and of the divine can be intuited in every aspect, however random and momentary, of the landscape. The divine, that in the Chinese art does not quite achieve a mythological countenance, it is in the first place as an ineffable element imbued in all nature's substance and forms. The special sense for this ineffable is mixed, in a happy convergence, with the love for finesse and for nuances, a love characteristic as well to the Chinese spirit, and which any visitor of an art museum form the Extreme Orient unveils it with ease. To such aptitudes, traits, and inclinations, we must bring in connection the Chinese thinking and religious life as well. This is because all spirit's manifestations are detached from the same root, and they confess the same patterns to the eye sufficiently accustomed to them. The aphoristic character, unsystematic anyway, of the Chinese thinking is not but a mode of the divinatory impressionism characteristic to the Chinese spirit. If

the Chinese horizon does not appear organized on a vast plan from the unique and motionless center of the looker subject, how could then fit in the Chinese spirit the horizon of a great system with its all-comprising coordinates? The Chinese thinker follows unknowingly, the example of the Chinese painter, he moves himself on the horizon, so that his thinking is expressed rather in allusive ideas, not thought to the very end, with a hemisphere left in shadow, and these coagulations of thought related to diverse concrete aspects of the nature, they juxtapose to one another, the interpenetrate on each other, like the circles without precise limits which compose the Chinese's imaginary space. These ideas having a hemisphere sunk in shadow, they are somewhat hinted while moving from a place to another. The full of finesse and of imponderable nuanced Chinese thinking, it is dominated by the tendency towards the temporary concrete and towards the meaning imbued with mystery. From here comes the discrete intertwining of this thinking with the illustrative saying, with the anecdotic, a with the parable, and with the legendary. The reality itself is - in its most exquisite moments – to the Chinese thinking: anecdote, parable, and legend. The human nature and existence seem to the Chinese a being loaded with a meaning. But never is the meaning examined in all the hidings of its consequences, but it is left by its own to get again lost into mystery. The religious life denotes rather a deep respect for the rules of the Nature, whose totality is reflected into fragment, whose fragments are kept together though the connections among them cannot be seen but only intuited. Here too the analogy with the panting is obvious. The landscape, as seen and understood by the Chinese painter, is not organized from a sole perspective point, but from several perspective points, but the landscape still does not fall apart in anarchical pieces, being kept in a secret unity right by the objective solidarity of the parts. The Chinrese painter actually goes in nature, in any place, as he would go to God's home for God waits to be visited. In the Chinese painter's opinion his European counterpart is, of course, much to subjective, because of wanting to forcedly impose his perspective to the entire nature. The Chinese painter respects too much the nature itself and its parts in order not to adapt, full of condescendence, his perspective to the nature's configurations. The Chinese thinker sees and thinks similarly to the Chinese painter, in circles, but without dissolving the while's unity and the mystery's unity. Nowhere else will we find as in China a plainer feeling that the Nature's elements are connected among themselves, regardless what opposite sometimes they would seem like. The Chinese thinking and feeling vibrate in the atmosphere of a consummate trust, granted to the solidarity from among elements. The nature's

elements enjoy at Chinese the prestige of some mythological powers, but without they to be configured in proper mythological contrivances. The Chinese imagination does not go beyond the palpable motives. The sky is divinized, as it is seen. The earth, likewise, as it is felt under feet. The light, the darkness, are divinized in their substance accessible to the senses. The nature, especially from vegetative perspective, it is composed of divine potentialities which are not imagined but seen with bodily eyes in their very materialness; the matter, the life, the vegetation, a certain century old tree grown in the crevasse of a rock, certain crystalline waterfall, are understood and adored as "divinities" as they are seen. The waterfall does not have a "demon", but it is a demon. The tree does not "have" a deity, but it is a deity. The landscape finds room in conscience and it is so appreciated by the Chinese art for to the Chinese spirit the landscape too is the equivalent of a mythology; the landscape is essentially of divine nature. In any circumstance wants to be in magical correspondence with all the rules of the Existence, for he believed himself to be an extension of the world's mystery; despite all of these, or more correctly said just because of these, the Chinese does not feel at all the need for building metaphysical systems of speculative nature; the speculation would men an irreverent gesture towards the power of the shadow, or even an offense brought to the mystery. In exchange, the Chinese, in divinatory accord with the mystery and with the meaning of the existence, he himself is consubstantial with the deepest mystery, so that his life as cush it becomes the equivalent of a metaphysics. The philosophers or the wisemen exalt the precepts of the non-speaking, they urge their disciples to be silent. The limit their guidance provided to their disciples to attentively watching the way their disciples behave themselves. This is for a man's behavior is understood as an exposition of a doctrine, or rather as the expression of a divination. These coordinates constitute the Chinese existence's coagulation mode. The Chinese are a paysans people living an ancestral life, in forms of geological archaicity: they feel themselves magically tied to the landscape that has the fabulous prestige of the palpable divine. The whole landscape is imbued by the category of the divine, with all landscape's things and creatures. In such a spiritual climate, any act – even the act of strict use – it achieves a ritual countenance. Any act means behavior, namely exposition, naturally cultic, of a teaching soaked in mystery. Many travelers described us, quite despising, the practical spirit, the technical and unwinged Chinese way of being, in contrast to the noble inclinations of other peoples. This presentation equals to a brutal disfiguration of a situation that still jealously guards its secrets. If the Chinese spirit had been

simply practically limited, as some people claim to be, then the Chinese would have been able to develop the practicality to the very possible edges in order to benefit of that. But where has the more recent European civilization – that is eminently a practical civilization – faced more staunch resistance than jut in China? Why such resistance against a civilization that was bringing so many practical benefits? It will not be useless to remind us that the Chinese are the ingenious authors of so many inventions which has become very practical elsewhere, but which are used by them rather as toys both for children and adults. The magnetic compass, the gun powder, the printing machine, are their inventions but, practically, these inventions have been exploited by others, because, strangely so, the Chinese shied to use those inventions in a practical manner. All of these are not a pleading in favor of the Chinese practical spirit. The Chinese paysan in working his field he would rather avoid using agricultural machines, because of using tools in the reports with the nature means getting out of nature's rules, and transgressing a rule actually means committing a crime, and that, sooner or later, it will bring revenge. Certainly, the Chinese has practical orientation in the sense of an inclination towards the simple essential, towards the life's necessary act, but he refuses that practical that has no direct connections with the mystery and with the life's meaning from ever. Thus, rightly so, the Chinese's simple and great practicality, it is the ritual exposition of an implicit metaphysics. The Chinese religiousness is not developed as a special ramification of the spirit, one differentiated in itself and for itself. The religiousness at Chinese is rather a permanent aspect of the act, or the man's behavior in the middle of the cosmic meaning. In a Chinese poetry, in a painting, in a ritual act, and in a metaphysical thought, we will always experience a confluence of all fragrances. If the mixing of the plans had been systematically unfolded, one would has doubtlessly obtained cultural monstrosities. But the Chinese spirit is discrete, temperate, without launching himself in wide developments methodically upheld: the Chinese spirit cultivates circles, the fragmentary, and the moment; the Chinese thinking is aphoristic, nuanced, but not because of an extreme differentiation, but rather nuanced due to a complexity kept in an embryo state. Given this situation, any admixture of plans (artistical, philosophical, religious, and practical) will lead to coagulations which remain only as some hints to fulfillment. In its reports with the "Whole" truest especially the guessing, the divination. The divination does not simply mean intuition, but it is the intuition of the Whole on the ground of the impression. It is interesting that the mythological as such, with its fabulations, with its contrivances of figure and meanings, it

appears to the Chinese less developed as in case of other peoples which produces great cultures, namely: Hindus, Greeks, Germans, Slavs, Mesopotamians, or Egyptians. But it is normal to be like that, due to the fact that to the Chinese, more than to other nations, the Nature itself, the landscape in all its materialness, by being penetrated by the category of the divine, it actually represents an undiminished equivalent of the mythology. The shy with its bluish substance is as such a transparent and luminous divinity of paternal genre; the dark and germinative earth is as such a tenebrous divinity of maternal genre. The sky fecundates the earth, the light fecundates the darkness; and not figuratively but objectively. The familial original duality which the great family of all the natural creatures is born out of, behold the object of the most ancestral Chinese conception. The light as male and the darkness as female, are primary existences of opposite sex. In order to create all the things and all the creatures both of them are necessary. It is supposed a duality from the very beginning, but the terms are not adversaries but complementary to one another. By comparing this dualism - which the light is the father and the darkness is the mother in - to the Iranian dualism which the light and the darkness are seen in a continuous battle in and which will come to an end when the light will overcome the darkness, we can realize the acuity of a difference between conceptions which start from the same basic elements. At the Chinese dominates the feeling of a very fertile solidarity among the elements of the nature. If the light is the good and the darkness is the evil, then at the Chinese the good and the evil complete on one another on the plan of the fruitfulness. At Iranians dominate the dynamic feeling of the dramatical war between the two irreconcilable principles: the good and the evil, the light and the darkness.

Under religious report, the most interesting apparition from China is, without any doubt, that of Lao-Tzi (Century VI, B.C.). The not too big aphorisms collection belonging to this mystic is entitled *Tao the ging*, the book on Tao and about Tzi. “Tao” is a fundamental term of the Chinese thinking and it has been translated as “way”, “sense”, or “order”. “Tzi” means “virtue”, or “life”. Actually, in the European languages one cannot find words for identically rendering the Tao and Tzi. This is because Tao should be translated by using a word meaning in the same time “way” and “meaning”; at its turn, Tzi would mean in the same time “virtue” and “life”. According to the suggestions of the most sapient scholars in the Chinese civilization, Tao would be the way originating in a metaphysical meaning, one that imposes to each thing a road, a going, a path. But what really means Tao we are going to understand better out of Lao-Tzi’s aphorisms.

If we supposed that Lao-Tzi is a mystic of the nature, we would only sketch a beginning of characterization. If judged according to his attitudes, Lao-Tzi would be, obviously, ant anticultural apparition, and especially and adversary of the civilization. And antisocial character. These attitude, so vaguely contoured, they doubtlessly belonged to him, but they do not exhaustively present him. These superficial traits determined some European literates – in some hurry – to compare Lao-Tzi to Rousseau. Such comparisons, if not only useless, they are even dangerous. We are intending to reconstitute the situations in order to benefit of an as impartial as possible judgment. The love for nature professed by Rousseau it belongs to a totally sentimental genre. This word places Rousseau in a world which Lao-Tzi's soul never walked through. Rousseau is disabused, he is bored by the frivolities and by the exciting pastorals of the rococo style, he gets emotional to tears in front of the nature, a nature remaining to him a forever lost Paradise. Rousseau is actually a man having no connections with the nature, an estranged form the great mother. He suffers, irremediably, because of his nostalgia for nature, btu he remains unable of the great reintegration. At Rousseau everything is aspiration and almost sickly emotion. He has nothing of the deep and mystic, simply and non-sentimental calmness of Lao-Tzi, who feels himself, together with the landscape, as maternally sheltered by Tao, fenced up, upheld and carried away by the impersonal and ineffable meaning of the existence, of the Whole. I said before that the Chinese have been reproached because they would have never been capable of a thinking of systematic order, but they would have been able to produce only aphoristic syllabifications. The critics – incredibly clumsy – who uttered such a reproach, they did not make the effort to compare Lao-Tzi's aphorisms to those of Pascal, Novalis, or Nietzsche, who are the most appreciated master of the European aphoristic. Such an undertaking was needed, if not for something else, at least to ascertain the fact that the aphorism is not always the same thing. While the Chinese painting and poetry are gifted in catching, in a divinatory manner, a nature's moment, a moment that the Whole is mirrored by, Lao-Tzi's thinking was as well undertaken in a divinatory manner. Any of his aphorisms, regardless what tiny as articulation and countenance is like, it actually comprised a feeling of the cosmical meaning. Therefore, the aphorism is neither capricious nor arbitrary, or made only to amaze at any costs. Lao-Tzi's aphorism, regardless what paradoxical would be like – and it is always paradoxical – it has nothing intendedly artificial, but it detaches itself, with perfect necessity, from the metaphysical feeling of the Whole. At no other author the paradox has a more natural substrate or a more organic necessity. Another exceptional

quality of Lao-Tzi's aphorisms is that each one holds the place for the Whole. Out of each Lao-Tzi's aphorism, even taken separately, one can reconstitute the human being and the world, that world that the human being feels herself/himself as living in, and the ultimate meaning, barely intuited, which the human being feels herself/himself tied to and penetrated by. Usually, the Europeans' aphorisms are mosaic stones, so that they constitute something only when perceived together, either a fragment of world or a metaphysical vision. If the Chinese painting and poetry, having as subject a shore of a lack, a golden fish, and a shivering reed, they express a moment which the eternity recoils into, Lao-Tzi's aphorism, that is concomitantly aspect and totalness, it can be heard as it would be the self-confessing voice of Tao. An exodus of the social and cultural rules, a turning back to the preferences of the individual self, and advancing towards the concomitantly secret and obvious rules of the Existence, behold the urged which penetrated Lao-Tzi. It limpidly appears, from all we know, that Lao-Tzi tries to self-surpass and to reach the supra-individual principle, but he does not undertake that except with the help of the principle itself, for that principle has its extension and accomplishment into the man, here and now. On occasions Lao-Tzi calls the Tao as the "nonexistence" or the "void". By commenting this equaling of the Tao to the void, some researchers stubbornly denied the Chinese authenticity of Lao-Tzi's thinking and they presented it as imported from India. We ought to specify the differences which despite not being noticed they still exist. To the Hindu thinking the impersonal principle, sometimes the void, it substitutes the sensitive world, the concrete nature with its multiplicity of phenomena. The principle or the void are the only dominant, the phenomenal word unveiling itself as a simple illusion. The ascetic from India opts for living into the impersonal principle, into the void, and he totally withdraws himself from the phenomenal world of the illusion. Lao-Tzi understand differently the report between the "metaphysical void" and the "phenomenal world". He sees the principle, the void, namely Tao, and the world of the concrete beings, namely the nature, as not being in a report of reciprocal exclusion. The principle does not substitute the things but it conditions itself to the things in a consummate reciprocity: the mystery if an extension of the phenomena, the phenomena are an extension of the mystery. Tao and the concrete beings complementarily oppose to one another by composing a whole together:

"There are thirty spokes in the hub of a wheel;

On the void from between them is founded the use of the cart.
You kneed the clay and you make vessels out of it:
On the void from within it is founded the use of the pitcher.
You breach walls making doors and windows,
In order a house to come to existence:
On their nothing is founded the use of that house."

That's why the existence provides characteristic, the non-existence provides use.

This is the famous Lao-Tzi's aphorism regarding the obvious efficacy of the negative. The existence is substance, but the void is the one giving meaning to this substance. All things are soaked in mystery which one cannot say anything precise about; for (the mystery, t. n.) is the indeterminate, the void. But the void does not substitute the things and so to degrade the things down to the value of simple illusions, but the void completes the things by giving them, in as sense, their true significance. The things palpitate in their true plenitude only when completed with the indeterminate. But at its turn neither the fund or the void is whole without things. From there comes the fact that the concrete things of the senses at Lao-Tzi are not simple illusions as they are at Hindus, but they are incomplete, as the pitcher is incomplete without its void from inside. The man, as living being, he must establish the contact with the mysterious fund of the existence, in order to make himself whole so that the man to become plenary. At Lao-Tzi, the pouring of the man into the metaphysical meaning of the things is not, as at Hindus, some sort of permanent withdrawal. Lao-Tzi's mysticism is like an instant-long touch with the void, with the meaning, and then like a tuning back into the felt world. Lao-Tzi's soul eternally pendulates between principle or void on one hand, and the senses' world on the other hand. Lao-Tzi's road is not total withdrawal, but it is pendulation. In any situation of real life, Lao-Tzi searches for a recomforting contact with the metaphysical meaning, but with the charge of this meaning he turns back into the natural condition, for Lao-Tzi is mastered by the conviction that the meaning, at its turn, is fulfilled only here. Lao-Tzi does not seek refuge from the world into the impersonal principle, but he lives within nature having the Tao-s light within himself. This mystical momentary-ism, this pendulation between nature and meaning, they circumscribe Lao-Tzi's

originality in comparison to the mysticism as state permanently postulated and as unilateral decision, radically ascetical, of the Hindus. Lao-Tzi's mysticism does not break the bridges, it does not impose itself forcedly by bending down and breaking down the thought; this mysticism has something wise and organic and it grows up within man even without the man noticing that. The mysticism at Hindus is a consistently achieved thinking having a unique direction, an alembicated state tormentedly produced through autosuggestion, through difficult exercises; Lao-Tzi's mysticism is rather natural life enlightened by a superior meaning. The Hindus' mysticism has non-human ardors; in the oven-like heat the metals are melted down and the impurities are removed. Lao-Tzi-s mysticism is soft. Besides that, Tao itself is rather presented as a feminine-maternal principle than a manly principle. The Tao's gate is the origin of the sky and of the earth, as Lao-Tzi says. This image superimposes to the world's origin almost an act of genesis, as a feminine birth. Or another aphorism:

> "Tao stays alone and it does not know the change,
> He walks in a circle and he does not know the incertitude.
> You can imagine Tao as the mother of the world."

A wiseman making of the world's meaning such a feminine-maternal icon, he will naturally cherish everything that is weak, tender, germinative, simple, and frail. We are quoting:

> "He who known his manly power
> but he remains in feminine weakness
> that one is the riverbed of the of the world.
> he is not deserted by the eternal life,
> he can turn back
> and become a child again."

The wiseman whom the existence's meaning has something maternal to, something tender, something germinative, something gentle, and something humble, he will not love the manly ostentatious action and he will not get excited by the feats of the strong and lucid will. Rightly so, Lao-Tzi proposed in everything and above all things: the inaction. This word is so

surprising in our ears which are accustomed to other sounds, so that we need a stopover, a clarification. Lao-Tzi's wisdom is an homage brought to inaction. But inaction in Lao-Tzi's view did not mean lazy dreaming or inactivity. Lao-Tzi valued only the deeds which somehow are done naturally through us, in accordance with the rules of the existence, namely those deeds which do not offend the feminine nature of the whole. Behold hos Lao-Tzi condemned the manhood inclined towards brutal force, and all the deeds resembling to a forcing of the natural order:

"Wanting to conquer the world through deeds?
I have been living and I have seen: that in not possible.
The world is a spiritual thing,
it is forbidden to behave brutally with it.
He who acts he will break the world,
He who wants to conquer the world, he will lose the world."

Or:

"He who wants to help his ruler according to the guidance
of Tao, he will not attempt to subdue the world by suing weapons.
His kind is: that of loving the withdrawal.
Where the warriors tarried, there will grow up thorns and brambles.
On the track of the great armies there surely will come a bad omen,
The worthy one desires assertiveness, but nothing more than that
He does not dare conquering with the force.
He wants assertiveness without bragging himself,
assertiveness without praising himself,
assertiveness without getting proud,
assertiveness because of not being possible otherwise,
assertiveness far from any violence.
When the creatures become powerful, they start getting old,
For this is the countersense

And the countersense is near to the end."

The manifest might explode in acts upheld by awaken wills and lucid targets, it finally will lead to "countersense", because the force does not take heed at the essence of the existence that is soft, but right because of that it is hiddenly-strong, strong through temperance and through discrete growing up. Maybe this kind of understanding deduced from cosmical rhythms is not appropriate everywhere and to anybody. But a people counting several hundreds of million individuals, living in millennial cities, as the Chinese people are, they can afford the wisdom of the inaction as fruit of a spirit fell in love with the eternally germinative face of the nature. Out of such an understanding, the Chinese sips the certitude of his eternity placed under the taking care of the Tao.

The water is the most frequently used symbol by Lao-Tzi. The water is, in the first place, the most-kindred to Tao element, for the water has the gift of not opposing any resistance, the water is humble, the water searches for the lowest places, but what powerful the water is like, right by its lack of resistance and humbleness. Secondly: the water appears in mythologies as the symbol of the motherhood, being related to fecundity, to the embryo-like existence, to the birth, to everything that is germinative, and to everything that is tender budding-up. In the context of these significations are self-understood all the virtues making the water the most appropriate symbol for comprising the meaning and the functions of Tao, the Mother of the existence. As magical-expressive symbol, Lao-Tzi used the water especially when speaking about Tzi, namely about that something that means, in a wide sense, concomitantly: "life" and "behavior" and "Virtue" and "worthiness":

"The great rivers are the kings of all valleys.
This is for the great rives known how to lie in low places."

Mots of Lao-Tzi's aphorisms and sayings surprise us with their paradoxical countenance. This was known by Lao-Tzi as well, for he said in a place: "The words of the truths seem to be turned inside-out". Due to the calm atmosphere emanating out of Lao-Tzi's aphorisms, for he used archaic images - simple and magical - crossing through centuries, as the gestures of the nature, one could think that the paradox is the very characteristic way Tao is expressing itself in.

While hearing these aphorisms, one will have the impression that not Lao-Tzi is a paradoxical author, but Tao itself is a paradoxical mystery with the words turned upside-down. Lao-Tzi did not do but to communicate us, as a child as old as the world is, what he saw in moments of wondering divination. A suggestion power that persuades not only the thought, but also the heart, the blood, our creature, and our pace, it springs out of the Lao-Tzi's aphorisms. In the world's literature these paradoxes are the only which, through their magical power, can be near to the words of Jesus of Nazareth. Their depth is not equaled except by their naiveness, one that could be reckoned as totally stranger to life. But behold that Lao-Tzi was the lucid-naïve, the old child who knew this thing as well. With this, the depth of the aphorisms increases, but still without losing anything of its naiveness, and that is a totally amazing thing:

"Everyone say that my Tao is magnificent,
But that Tao is not made for reality.
But right this is the greatness of Tao
that does not seem made for reality."

I said that the life's doctrine as professed by Lao-Tzi culminated in the advice, often misunderstood: do not act! This advice does not urge somebody to passiveness that is everywhere condemnable. This advice rather contains the rejection of any conscious agitation, of any individualistic and exalted comfort, one that jumped out of the order of the things and one that does not take heed at rules of the existence. You must wait silently for everything to be fulfilled naturally, when it is needed and how it is needed. The deed must fall like a ripe fruit, when even a weak breeze is enough to detach it from the tree-branch. One cannot deny that, apparently, the advice "do not act" reminds about the Hindus' negative ethics. But this time too, a more attentive feeling and weighing in, it will impose a distinction. The Hindus' negative ethics is founded on the fact that the man cannot save himself through deeds, regardless how good they be. The norm followed by Hindus is anything but the logical result of a general negation. The Hindus reckoned the life and an evil, and the repeated life - the reincarnation – as an even bigger evil. At Lao-Tzi the aspects are totally different. He looked at the life with profound and quiet

serenity, by taking it as it is, as one could make something of the life immediately after he has rooted himself in Tao. Lao-Tzi did not dream of a life after death. He was neither scared of reincarnation, for such ideas did not torment his soul at all, for he was so tightly connected to the earthly life. Lao-Tzi was a genius of the simplicity, he avoided the speculation and the sophism, he did not complicate his problems. His metaphysical vision was not a developed one, but it rather was the seed of a vision, or a simple divinatory thought that contained in itself the whole, as an intuition. To Lao-Tzi, anyway, there did not exist except this world and this life, as contained in Tao, as a multicolored stone mounted on a ring. The ascetic from India withdraws himself into Brahman or into Nirvana, and he looks at the life as an exterior thing, distantly, despising the life, or with a bitter smile. Lao-Tzi was, from time to time, for an instance, a guest to Tao. Loaded with the honey of the eternity, Lao-Tzi turned himself, each time, back into the human conditions, to fill up his honeycombs. Lao-Tzi's religiousness had a tonality of itself that cannot be confounded to anything else. The renunciation to the apparent goods of the countersense which the life in society and in civilization is dominated by, the renunciation without torment, the inward illumination on the moment of the contact with the so-called void, the sincere humbleness, without hesitation thoughts, the love for all creatures, the restraining of the activity to what is close and natural, a mastered reserve towards any excessive and phantasmagorical distances, tarrying in the circle as in a nest of Tao, all of these together, they lend to Lao-Tzi's religiousness that original tonality that subjugates and elevates. The religiousness floats in an atmosphere of peace relaxation, it dresses itself up in paradox without tension and it flows directly out of the mysterious stump of the existence. There is, in the Lao-Tzi's religiousness something that is virginal, feminine, sublime in the same time, something archaic and freshly-tender concomitantly, an admixture of local and international, an intertwining between organic and non-world. Lao0Tzi's religiousness is mainly equivalent to the sentiment of living in the Tao's riverbed. Lao-Tzi feels himself in the cosmical riverbed both soft and strong, as the water is. Lao-Tzi's mysticism if focused, without expansions, without *Schwärmerei*, his religious conscience does not feel the urge for an infinite overflowing, of ecstasy, into Tao: his religious conscience is rather a supra-awakening lasting for an instant, and then there is the aroma this awakening spreads it over all states. Tao, because of being mystery, it is beyond: Tao is the other plate of the great scales, or the world's void part, but concomitantly. Tao is actually present both in all rules and in all creatures. Lao-Tzi touched Tao by guessing it; without

disturbance, a shivering Lao-Tzi found Tao in any given condition of the natural life. From Tao's threshold, Lao-Tzi always brought with himself the wisdom necessary to face any circumstances. Them who love the literary comparisons, we can concede, of course, that Tao is the indeterminate, as Brahman- Atman of the Hindu mystics, as Plotinus's Unique. But what a general formula can served to, when it about attempting to characterize the religiousness forms? One need to attentively, sharply, and staunchly differentiate among religiousness forms, otherwise he will not succeed. In the present case, the differentiation would remain a simple desiderate, if we did not resort to the symbols, to the feelings, and especially to those almost imperceptible stylistic frames which compose, by their confluence, a certain religious mode. Seen from this standpoint, Lao-Tzi's Taoism is something totally different that the Brahman mysticism or the Nirvanic mysticism or the Neoplatonic mysticism. Where les could we find, in harmonious interpenetration, all these components? Tao, as mother of the world, the supreme meaning present in weakness, in everything that is germinative, childish, or feminine, in humbleness, in simplicity, and categorically absent in everything that seems to be irresistible, strong, ostentatiously, and scary. In order to approximate the nature's mysticism characteristic to Lao-Tzi is by no means indicated us to use general motifs characterizing any mysticism. We rather need to intuit it through the transparency of its own symbols, and in the templates of its style. And we have seen to what extent the profile of Lao-Tzi's mystique is conditioned by the divinatory impressionism, by the nesting into circles, by the momentariness loaded with eternity, by the absence of an infinite expansion, and by the game of the nuances.

If Lao-Tzi's influence mostly recoiled on the Chinese poetry, art, and mystique, Kung-Tzi (Confucious) was the one who influenced the Chinese life itself more than anybody else. The chronicle claims that the first childhood of Kung-Tzi coincided with Lao-Tzi's old age. The legend tells us that the two holy fathers of the Chinese spirit would have met once and between them even took place a dispute followed by a not so pleasant consequence for Kung-Tzi. But that story only dramatizes the centuries-long quarrel that occurred between the followers of one and of another. Kung-Tzi is the great pedagogue, the moralist, the reformer of the state-life, the restorer – influenced by archaic longings – of the Chinese spirit. The day and night dream of Kung-Tzi was that of offering a new guidance to the state-life which awfully decayed during his time. The pedagogical and statist preoccupations of Kung-Tzi have, all of them, a substrate that, while researched, it will lead us up the specific Chinese religiousness. Kung-Tzi understood the

reform of the state-life not as a renewer revolution, but as a turning back to an original purer form. Kung-Tzi did not nourish overthrowing ambitions, but he cultivated a restoration ideal. As example in everything and for everything, he took the state of the first Chinese emperors, namely the legendary antiquity mastered by great rulers who lived maybe 2000 years before his time. In the legendary antiquity, according to Lao-Tzi's opinion, there was the divine model, the seedling one necessarily must plant again in the Chinese soil that was devastated and degraded by all history's storms. Kung-Tzi proceeded, consequently, with the whole imaginable zeal, to study the past, the mythological emperors' rules of life, the social organization from the legend's age and from the realm of the fairytales, the songs, the music, and especially the ancestral virtues or the wonderful rules of the good manners. On the reinvigoration of an ancestral law barely remembered by the people's memory, if not this memory was only a dream as well, from the reinvigoration of that law Kung-Tzi hoped for a new flourishing of the empire to take place. Kung-Tzi's fate experienced many deceptions, but to disappointment was able to discourage his soul insomuch as him to renounce to his plans. But maybe this thing was very natural to him, for he was penetrated by a deep creed which, as any Chinese who respects himself, he did not do much fuss of. Kung-Tzi believed in Tao, in the sense, and in the cosmical order. While at Lao-Tzi the manifestation place of the Tao was in the first place the nature, at Kung-Tzi this place is above all the *social life*. According to Kung-Tzi the social life was full of "Tao", more than ever, during the antiquity of the legendary emperors. But during history this place has been quite emptied of "Tao", and thus Kung-Tzi's problem was that of attempting the restoration of Tao in the state-life. Kung-Tzi appears to us as he was a traditionalist of a vigor and consistency as no other in the mankind's history. The organization of the life, the ancestral morals, and the rites were, according to Kung-Tzi, the very expression and manifestation of Tao. From setting again these rites in practice, Kung-Tzi hoped for miraculous effects: the coming back of Tao or of the cosmic sense in the Chinese empire. Lao-Tzi saw the past from such a magical-metaphysical angle. We have to highlight that to some extent, because Kung-Tzi is presents by biographers and exegetes, especially in the present Europe, as a metaphysical guy, as an insupportable pedantic moralist, as a practical pedagogue, as that's all. That much can understand the European fumbling attempting to find out its way among appearances. The fact is that the pedantic Lao-Tzi studies history, the chronicles, and he tarries, with an indescribable passion, upon some chains of facts, without beginning, and without an end. Could this patience denotate only a dry spirit of an

archivist? Apparently yes. But at Kung-Tzi we should mostly see the reverse side of the medal. By studying history with an archivist meticulosity, he felt himself advancing into the mysteries of Tao, for to him *history was the substance of Tao*. Behold how, his dusty and mediocre industriousness is instantly lightened. Certainly, on speculative plan the metaphysics was not of interest to Kung-Tzi, but he lives within metaphysics, for all his acts and thoughts regarding the life vibrated by Tao's echoes. Kung-Tzi was dominated by some sort of unconscious metaphysics, which all his personal rites sprang out of. He was shivering deep in his flesh by the tender intuition of the Tao, but in the same time he refrained himself from any speculation which would not have been useful for the general life implicitly framed into cosmic rhythms. Kung-Tzi reached Tao through divination and he turned his back to Tao because of religious shyness: namely not in order him to no longer see Tao but, in the first place, for he knew Tao as a steadfast shield. With this shield defending his back, Kung-Tzi directed his gaze towards the social life. Lao-Tzi, without speculating in a mythical-theoretical manner upon Tao, he lived of "Tao" in "nature". Kung-Tzi, without speculating in a mythical-theoretical manner, he lived of "Tao" in "history", in "diurnal", in the "state-life". One must notice a detail that does not lack a hidden irony. The Christian missionaries who yore went in China armed with an entire theology, with ready-made and automatic answers to any philosophical and religious question, they showed themselves quite surprised by the speculative desert they found in China. To Kung-Tzi, who dies many centuries ago, these European spies contested any religiousness. Among others, and due to childishly misinterpreted reasons, as this one: on one occasion Kung-Tzi was ill and he was asked by his disciple Tze-Lu if he would have allowed him to pray for him. Kung-Tzi doubted whether such thing must be done, so that he answered: "It happened to me, it was long ago, to pray myself once". Of course, Kung-Tzi's answer could mislead us. According to the Christian customs, mostly missionary, there would follow a judgment without any possibility of defense. Kung-Tzi was not praying, so that he was a miserable deprived of religious life. But such a condemnation is summary and hasty and narrow. Before anything, it seems us very wrong to apply Kung-Tzi's religiousness judgment criteria which cannot grab it. This is because of, obviously, at Kung-Tzi the very absence of the prayer appears to be a symptom of a certain religiousness. Was not Kung-Tzi living of Tao and through Tao any daily situations? The most felt of his conviction was actually that, in essence, everything takes place by being ordered out of Tao's heart, so that any attempt to change the things' flowing, even only by the intervention of

some prayers, it would have meant bringing an offense to Tao. Behold that Kung-Tzi's answer: "it happened to me yore to pray myself once" it equals itself to the restrained thrill of a prayer. This answer is the undeniable expression of a totally specific colorful religiousness.

Of course, Kung-Tzi's genius can be more perseveringly searched for in the ethical domain, which he imprinted a ritual physiognomy to. Kung-Tzi-s genius proved to be a tireless myths creator. The ceremonious acts, the rites, the rule of the good manners, were, according to Kung-Tzi, the extension or the manifestation of Tao in all circumstances, either solemn, or daily, of the life. Through ritualization, the daily is imbued with Tao. The ritual practice calculates with a magical effect upon life, upon state, and upon the world. The rite produced order. All customs, acts, and gestures belonging to Kung-Tzi, destined to answer the most diverse circumstances, they were ritualized in a way or another. There are books preserving these ritualizations. We are going to quote here from a sizable material available to us, and immense material classified on sections and paragraphs, destined to public use: When Kung-Tzi went to his birth village, after he reached to be a great nobleman: "Kung-Tzi behaves simply and sincerely, as he would have not been able to speak". What purpose could have had this behavior of obvious ritualic nature manifested by Kung-Tzi in his birth village? The closes interpretation to the real explanation seems to us the following: in his birth village Kung-Tzi felt himself somewhat in his maternal bosom almost speechless, and that was expressed by him through a taciturn simplicity. Totally different was Kung-Tzi's behavior at the Court. In this regard too, are available to us several records. For instance: Kung-Tzi held his robe with both his hands and he went up holding his breath like he would have not dared to breathe". It is here too, a lucidly ritualized act, according to the rules required by Tao in front of the imperial throne. The place where the emperor tarried was reckoned as Tao's space: getting close to that space, Kung-Tzi intentionally held his breath, for there one must not disturb through anything the sense of the eternity, not even by the most inoffensive acts of the life as the breath is. Kung-Tzi answered any situation through ritualic behaviors, which were imagined, without any doubt, on the measure of some ancient rules, but many of them were contrived by his own genius. According to Kung-Tzi Tao required the ritualization of the entire life. Tao is accomplished in the daily life through rites. Or course, we the European have almost totally lost the sense of the rites. The rites still lasting among us are inherited forms, voided of the meaning which, originally, they have been filled up with. The Chinese life, so deeply penetrated and framed by rites, by ceremony, it seems strange to us, a

pilling up of empty forms, if not even hilarious. If we transpose ourselves, though, by making a necessary psychological effort, in Kung-Tzi's soul, who created and live the ritualic forms spontaneously, and ingeniously, and with an unparalleled sense of the significations, we are going to be more lenient. Kung-Tzi's genius was just this: a creator of rites, the greatest the mankind ever produced. The rites, facing their spontaneous creation, they will not at all be stranger to the spirit; on the opposite, they are the expression of a metaphysical feeling, the translation into act of some religious states and, as such, they are equally suggestive as a metaphor or a poetry are, which would be added to, the magic's dimension as well.

THE COSMIC HEALTH

In the world's history, the Persians occurred several centuries after Hindus. It is not quite probable that these peoples would have coinhabited in historical time and, later on, they would have differentiated from one another up to a spiritual antagonism. This spiritual antagonism is all the more interesting as it grew up from a common core, probably sufficient through language affinities and mythological motives. The Hindu, by rushing in the counties where they have been inhabiting up to these days, they conquered autochthonous populations and they established on vast territories their social and state life. Shortly after conquest they were engulfed by a continental deception: they started to see the life as an evil, the given world likewise, and the action nonetheless. The Hindu conquered the landscape corresponding to the infinite horizon that was palpitating within their heart, but after conquest they experienced the process of a deep disillusion. They gathered within themselves by coiling up their antennae burn by the sun of the faraway realms, and they adopted as ideal the withdrawal from the given world, a withdrawal in oneself, in the abstract and bodiless existence of Brahman, or into the Nirvanic void. Such life-denying attitude and of withdrawal from horizon, it occasioned a quite unfavorable atmosphere to the slate life that would have called to affirm itself on a great and high historical line. The state history is reduced in India just to a necessary minimum, in order to make possible the history of the spirit, of that spirit having his roads, trials, victories, and fallings. The accent was moved towards some aspects of the spiritual life, towards knowledge, towards contemplation, towards saving the life from the snares of the illusion, and towards indifference to action. To the history

the Persian are a less coagulated people. Several centuries before Alexander the Great, the Persian affirmed themselves explosively, by founding during only a few generations and empire stretched from Indus to the Aegean Sea, and to Abyssinia. Since the very moment of their gushing up on the history's scene, the Persians proved to have a powerful expansive spirit. They did not shy of war and they adhered, with the whole their heart, to purpose conquered in battle, by action, and by work. While and Hindus everything was seen from the perspective of knowledge and disillusion related to the given world, at Persians everything was reckoned from the standpoint of the activism and of an unconditional adherence to the world. Obviously, that did not mean at all that, for the Persians, everything that is within world would have been good; no: the world can be full of evil things, but one must make the world good by action. From such an assertive predisposition and ready for active interventions, it comes out the fact that at the Persians the tendency towards a maximum of eminently active history and of a material profile, towards a history accompanied by a spiritual life strictly necessary to the souls not to succumb. The documents which reached us, are a sufficient testimony that the Persians did not have, not even close, either the imagination or the speculative power, either the force of internal focusing, which characterized the Hindus. In exchange for that, the Persians are a people with hypertrophied historical aptitudes. Their imperial expansion that enormously surpassed the natural borders of their ethnical substance, it exposed the Persona to rapid flourishings and premature fallings. We have said that the Persians manifest a tendency for regarding everything from the perspective of the activism, but next to this inclination we also ascertain at them their thirst for dramatizing everything. They dramatized the cosmical events as well and they did with the human events. The appetite for dramatic is congenial to the Persian spirit; the Persian conception about existence was configured around a monumental and simplified dramatism taking place between the powers of the good and the powers of the evil. All the powers of the good on one side, all the powers of the evil on the other side: the fonts are clear. There is not possible either an admixture or an equivocal. An incorrigible optimism id added to this dramatic inclination. This is for the powers of the good will once triumph over the powers of the powers of the evil. Then the end of the world will take place and the sole master will remain the Good. But one must notice that the Persian dramatism, cosmically monumentalized, it totally lacks the "tragic": despite all vicissitudes, the good will finally triumph. In this concern there is no doubt. Behold a certitude annulling any tragical earthquake. At Persians any action has the sense of a

monument integrated in a battle having precise fronts, in eth only great battle between good and evil, a battle of neither simply human, nor simply local, but universal. All the good or only useful actions, even the daily agricultural works for instance, were understood by Persians as they would have had the pathetic meaning of a battle with the devil's powers. Despite the fact that the Persians dramatize their activism on a cosmic scale, the sentiment of the tragic so dominant to some European peoples, it seemed extirpated at Persians. According to Persian conception, any action that is taken next to the principle of the good will fail, regardless the result of the action. This is because the actions took next to the principle of the good, they gather up, and they are capitalized, and the contribute, thus, to the final triumph that is inevitable, bringing joy, and the only one that matters.

In the Persian mythology this mentality was the first to be contoured. Thus, one of the myths tells us about God Jima who was, during the golden age, the patriarchal protector of the mankind. About Jima's reign were told the followings:

> "The golden age was when the Great Jima, who was rich in flocks, the greatest among the beings lightened by the sun, was ruling over people. The creatures were wonderfully increasing and they multiplied to such a scale that Jima needed to widen the earth for three times in order to fit them. Under his reign, there were neither frost nor canicules, neither old age, nor death: the water did not dry and the plants did not whiter, but the people and the animals were immortal and eternally young."

God Jima can be found at Hindus as well. But and Hindus Jima is rather a god of the death, while at Pesina Jima appears as a lord of the terrestrial life, as protector of the youth and of the health who, for the sake of the creatures, he *widens the earth for three times*. This myth of the life without illness and of the youth without old age and without death, it expresses beautifully and lapidary the positive attitude in front of the existence and the expansive optimism of the Persian spirit. Another fundamental myth of the Persians tells us about the full of happenings fight – and as from a fairytale – of God Atar, the god of the fire, and dragon. This myth prefigures the dramatic dualism characteristic to the conceptions triggered later on as

compositions characteristic to the Persian mentality. Of course, this mentality become consummately crystalized only in the doctrine of Zarathustra.

We do not know precisely when Zarathustra, the Persian Prophet, lived. His seemingly lived between the year 1000 and 600 B.C., remaining more probable a date close to the year 600. Zarathustra's conception had a dualistic fund. Ahura Mazda, the lord of the wisdom (Or-mazd) is opposed by the spirit of the evil, Ako Mainyin (Ahriman). By and large, Zarathustra's teaching is crossed through by a supreme passion of veracity. Not only Ormazd is a God of the truth but Ahriman is god of the truth as well despite being the supreme god of the evil, and therefore of the lie too, but he proves to be in good faith in the battle he wages against the good and the light. Ahriman engaged in battle rather because of a wandering of his spirit, or because of not knowing what the good is, and he even thinks that the good is on his side. This veracity and ethics of the good faith that is attributed by Persians even to Ahriman it lends an air of noblesse to the universal war. Ormazd is, of course, in the first place, the creator of the world. But the Persians prefer to highlight especially his quality of keeper and judge of the world. The lord of the wisdom and of the light defends, moment by moment, the rules of the universe against Ahrima's lusts, who, together with his armies, he lies in stalking, aiming to conquer the world. Ahriman is the one bringing into the world sterility, illness, sin, and death. Ormazd exercises his power within world by sending luminous energies whose mythological embodiment are the angels. Grace to Ormazd's action, through his envoys, the holiness within world increases ceaselessly. At the end, when Ormazd will defeat Ahriman, a resurrection of all death will take place. Ormazd will judge everybody's deeds, and he will allow some people to enter his diaphanous kingdom, while others will be condemned to burn in fire. For we have been talking about holiness, which is helped by Ormazd's immortal emissaries to ceaselessly increase within world, we are mentioning here that the holiness has, at Persians, an apart signification. It has quite nothing in common with the ascetic holiness that is so valued in India. Once more, between Hindus and Persians it is necessary to be made a comparison through opposition. Holy is, at Persians, everything that promotes the existence within world, while at Hindus the holiness coincides with denial of the world and withdrawal from within world. To Persians, the happy and fecund life, having many descendants, it is a holy life, and the material richness is a virtue; the poverty, when because of the guilt of somebody, it is reckoned as vice and sin. The agricultural work is sacred: "He who sows wheat, he sows holiness" – this is written in *Zend Avesta*, the bible of the

Persians. The laziness, the sterility, the lack of children, the illness, they are sins as the lie and any evil deed are too. One can notice in the Persian mentality some kind of *osmosis* between all the positive elements of the existence; thus, the moral good takes a physical countenance of light, of health, of fertility, and the material life, the richness, the fecundity, and the health, at their turn, they have an ethical air and they make together a moral front. The physical health is reckoned as a moral virtue, and the moral virtue is reckoned as health. Naturally, the negative aspects of the existence become solidary in a similar general osmosis: the organic addictions, the illness, and the death, they are effects of the devil, as also the physical darkness; and all of these together take a countenance of sins in a moral sense. At its turn, any sin of moral nature is reckoned as a result of some sort of sickness, or of the physical darkness. Ormazd himself has, in essence, the countenance of the cosmical health, while Ahriman is like a cosmical illness. One could say that Zarathustra's doctrine has a biological profile, if we extend the biological up to moral regions. Because all these positive aspects of the existence are osmotically confounded to one another, they say that at Persians there is no hierarchy of these aspects in the form of some more or less preferred values. The multitude of the descendants, the fecundity, they are cherished as the moral deeds are and equally much as the health and the individual richness. All of these stay in the service of Ormazd, and therefore all of them are good, and through all of them increases the capital of holiness within world, and through all of them is promoted the final triumph of Ormazd, the lord of the light.

Zend Avesta's mythology and cosmology tell us that all the creatures of our world, and the beings and the powers of the unseen regions as well, they are divided in two groups: some of them compose Ormazd's army, while the others compose Ahriman's army. Ormazd fight for enthroning his godlike kingdom within world. The end of all things is declared as a catastrophe that will precede the triumph of the Kingdom of God. The Persian conception on history and on the state-life is perfectly integrated in this dualistic cosmology and in this optimistic eschatology. The Persian state is reckoned as Ormazd's state and as the most illustrious battle means for enthroning the Kingdom of God. The enemy states as also their peoples are, naturally, the allies of Ahriman. Thus, to Persians, fighting their enemy means collaborating to Ormazd's expansion within world. The state-life with all its works and tools, the history with the wars, they entered, to Persians, an eschatological direction and finality. Too little preoccupies with the problems of the soul, with the individual fate, the Persian think at the biological and material plan of the

world when it is affirmed as ethical energies. The Persians think in huge dimensions with a granitic force, in the vigorous and optimistic perspective of an eschatology tonic as the health itself. The Persians cogitate massively, in blocks, and they have a virile feeling. By avoiding the tenderness of the thought, they not quite complicate or nuance the problems of the spirit. On can ascertain, as well, along Persian's history centuries, a pronounced conformism. The religious problems, that elsewhere is complicated through individual thinking and individual sentiments, it hasn't been finding favorable ground among Persians. One could say that at Persians the religion is a matter of connective conscience. And on the ground of the things which we said before, one could specify that the religion is, at Persians, the collective conscience that the man must be a political ally, to say so, of God. he who does not thinks within the frame of this public conformism, he will be treated as he would have been touched by the cosmic disease.

MEASURE AND ECSTASY

One of the cradles of the human spirit, Greece, was occupied by the ancient Greeks in the second millennium B.C. They were lucky to find here an ancient culture: the Mycenean-Cretan culture. From purely informative perspective, we will not do else but presenting the convergent result of all works on prehistory and archaeology by saying that the Mycenean-Cretan culture was due to a population that was not racially kindred with the Arian invader populations. In the Mycenean-Cretan culture we can find the oldest mythological and cultic motifs insatiably assimilated by the Greek populations. The archaeologists reconstitute the most part of this culture. An archaic panorama parades in front of us. Orgiastic cults, with strange priestesses holding snakes, rituals taking pace in caves imagining the maternal bosom; feminine divinities of the vegetation. The Mycenean-Cretan culture was characterized by an amazing abundance of feminine deities, as also by a still unclarified mythology populated with chimerical beings, fantastically composed of all motifs offered to imagination by the animal regnum. It is about beings composed of fragments, without strict rules, according to the model of the Sphynxes which is more familiar to us, having limbs borrowed from mammals, reptiles, birds, and man. From the same archaeologists we find out that most the female deities appearing in the Homeric

pantheon, they would have Mycenean-Cretan prototypes. This can be quite true, as it can be also quite verisimilar that many of the gods from the Greek pantheon were inherited together with the inventory of an older culture, or they were at least borrowed from that older culture. It is not a novelty to anybody that Dionysus was a foreigner of Thracian origin, but it is too little known that also a god that became Greek by excellence, as Apollo, he originated from Libya. A Nitzsche or Spengler, when they proceeded to characterized the Greek spirit, they chose just the name of this god so they spoke about the Apollonian forms of the Greek culture. The history ahs its ironies. The fact is that Apollo, a god of originating from Likia, even at Homer, he was still reckoned as the biggest enemy of the Greeks. This raises us the question if not the illustrative characterization of the Greek spirit would have been rather matched better by another divine character than Apollo who one day was willy-nilly adopted as Greek. Of course, Zeus is a divinity brought by Greeks from the cloudier Noth of their origin. Zeus, when fighting his monstruous forerunners and the titans, so that he made a cosmos out of chaos, are summarizes in his being, with wonderful virtues, of plastic and mythical synthesis, the most characteristic traits of the Greek spirit. But let's consider all of these as a divagation.

Besides the faith in gods there is a second factor playing a role that does not lack any interest in the Greek religiousness, namely eth faith in *fatum*, in *moira*. The destiny or the moira is like an impersonal power mastering within all and upon all. Each mortal has her/his own part of fatum. Out of this faith, though, there did not come the fact that the Greeks would have been too gravely touched by fatalism. Rightly so, it seems that the Greek individual did not feel herself/himself submitted to moira in her/his very daily unimportant acts, or in all small events which could happen to her/him, which she/he mixed or was mixed in. Moira seems rather a "*line of the life*" connecting the really important manifestations and happenings of an individual's life, a vast profile unfolded in a given time, of the individual biography. And the "line" permitted, according to Greek's faith, some play of deeds corrections, and approximations.

There is also a third factor entering the componence of all religions, that one of the beliefs regarding the death. In this concerns one must know that the Greeks did not think at death but shyly. Death meant to them the kingdom of the shadows, a semi-existence. The Greeks affirmed the life in the closed the horizon of the cosmos and in its typically idealized forms. The mythological expression of this affirmative attitude was the golden image of Mount Olympus. That attitude had also a reverse side, one not less real. The Greek's life was accompanied also by

an incontestable melancholia. The presence of the death within world, as semi-existence, as uncoagulated shadow, made the Greeks tributary to a permanent sorrow. Their sorrow was fueled by the thought that the given life, with possibilities of ideal beautifying, is not eternal. The Greek melancholy resembles to the teenager's melancholy: it is like a steadfast sub-tone of the soul, but it actually is a simple reverse side of too much loving the life. The melancholy is the reverse side of the affirmation, even when the Greek, with her/his blood cooled down by a poetical wave, that says that the greatest good for the man is that of not being born.

The Homeric man's religiousness consists of the belief that the man's purpose is fulfilled within the world, and not beyond the world. The Homeric man believes that the gods intervene distantly familiarly, but quite humanly, in the human businesses. The Homeric man had the indifferent belief in a fatum that can be easily corrected by the interventions of the gods. The death does not play any role in the accomplishment of the human purpose as such, because of being the death a semi-existence, a shadow. Still, the profound sentiment of the death highlights and given a very complex tonality to the Greek vital affirmation. Within the limited space, intramundane, the people felt themselves cohabitants with the gods. The gods mingle within the fight among people, but not because of a fanaticism upholding adversities and comraderies aiming to some eschatological targets, nut, only like that, asked or not asked, rather for their love for quarrels, and in a pronounced biased spirit. Anyway, the man's purpose culminates in this terrestrial life that must be ennobled and beautified through the man's and gods' powers.

Therefore, the religiousness of the Greek moves in the riverbed conditioned by the style of his whole spiritual life. It is true that, on occasions, the autochthonous substrate finds its voice as well, or the soul infiltrated from elsewhere. But, towards what? Towards magic, towards thoughts referring to death, to immortality, or to the sort of life after death; towards the darken hemisphere of the existence, towards the subterranean divinities or of the vegetations, ruled by the obscure powers of the earth and also towards transcendental powers exceeding any mundane form. The Greek spirit has, due to its style, the gift of controlling all inclinations of such nature, of attenuating them, by tolerating them only on the edge of the life. It is not less true that these inclinations persist through époques, by rhythmically crossing through sudden quenching, and through unexpected recrudescence. The Greek is a spirit of the typical norms, but somewhere in a corner of his soul he approves to himself also an obscure interest towards the mysterious exceeding any form. It is not here only about the Dionysiac inclinations, about cultivating the

orgiastic drunkenness, and about experiencing the fierce ecstasy, but it is also about the odd inclinations towards mystical rituals which prefigure a postmortem superior haunted existence, and it is about rituals which prepare, as the Greek say, the immortality. The gifts of the clairvoyance, the divination, the telepathy, the hypnosis, the trance, and other parapsychological and meta-psychic phenomena were known, at least in their effects, also by the people, besides some circles of people who were initiated in their knowledge, and who intuited, in such phenomena, the man's capacity of establishing a contact with supernatural powers. In the VI Century B.C., such tenebrous phenomena took a torrential character in Orphism. But these diverse inclinations were themselves limited, in order to sometime become domestic or totally assimilated by the Greek thinking, as brilliantly proves to us Pythagoras, Heraclitus, and above all: Plato. Due to the genius of Plato the Greek spirit recorded one of the greatest triumphs, namely not by eliminating the Greek motifs but, a contrary, by integrating these motifs to a Greek vision. Plato enormously borrowed from others, but he transformed everything. That moment was unique and of an Olympic height. Later on, in the centuries flaking on both sides the apparition of the Christendom, the Greek thinking and religiousness came again in contact with foreign motifs. Under the sign of the syncretism, the Greek thinking and religiousness gets mingled, as it was touched by the fever of a universal wedding, with diverse doctrines, with Asian mythologies, with Palestinian mythologies, and with African mythologies, and with the cults and teachings of Orphic type which reappeared in the daylight after centuries in a row they were the subterranean patrimony of some repudiated sects. The malleable Greek philosophy, once started on the path of the concessions, it took a phantastic, odd, barbarian, tormented, and fiery countenance. All extremes stay together and all the myths interpenetrate one another, and so they diluted their profiles up to incertitude, in order to produce, in the end, as result, the various gnostic rituals and teachings. Withing the space of this excessive flora - somewhat a greenhouse flora – of the syncretic systems, there was recorded a final and grandiose Grek victory. This triumph was Plotinus's Neoplatonism (205-270 A.D.). The current opinion sees in Plotinus the genius mystic of the paganism that happened to have an immense influence upon the Christian mysticism as well, especially upon Dionysus the Areopagite. But there are mysticism and mysticism. Let's get use to no longer see in all mysticism one and the same weed. Even by looking the things from outside, we will notice at Plotinus, for instance, the mystical states appeared as a coronation of a work of severe thinking and of fierce discernment, that was

maintained in very clear Greek forms, and that will be totally amazing if we compare it to the other products of that time. Plotinus was the first to succeed integrating Plato's philosophy of vaster metaphysical significations. Plotinus admitted the Unique as a supra-existence, the Unique that is above any attributes and categories. Out of this Unique as divine principle and divine supra-existence, everything derives through successively degraded emanations. Out of the supra-categorial Unique emanates the logos that would correspond to the unitary ensemble of the Platonic ideas. The logos is a not quite perfect copy of the Unique. Through logos the Unique proceeds to diversify Himself under the mode of the multiplicity. Out of logos there derives, at its turn, the soul of the world, or a demiurge. Then, through other derivates, it will be reached the concrete materialness of the world. The cosmogonical process would represent, therefore, a process of fatal decadence, the emanations being ever imperfect copies of the supreme Unique. What is the man's purpose in this universe created in the image and in the likeness of a huge descending ladder? The man's purpose would that that of again climbing the slope of the decadence, to search for the road back, to make himself – as much as possible – like the Unique, like God. Such a likeness or even a union with God is not a simple theoretical desiderate; the man can really reach this state, according to Plotinus, not only afterlife, but also during life in the so-called ecstasy-states. The prior condition required by the ecstasy-states it is, naturally, the moral consummation, the man's progressive getting rid of the materialness's imperfect emanations, namely the consummation achieved through the ascetic life. Plotinus was ashamed of having a body and his highest aspiration was the ecstasy. So, the man reaches the mystical state of union with God by a gradual ascension from the world of the materialness into the world of the ideas, and from here the man crosses to the existence of the Unique. Behold, we are here in front of the first metaphysical mysticism of Greek-European countenance. In order us to understand what this means, we need to compare Plotinus's mystic to the forms of the Asian mysticism, especially to the Hindu mysticism. In the Brahman doctrine the man's union with the divine principle of impersonal nature, it is given from the start: the man must only accomplish on conscience plan - through the true knowledge – a fact given *eo ipso* as a fundamental fact of the existence. According to Brahman conception, the man is called only to remove the illusion that he would not be one with God. Here the mystical process does not represent an essential adding to a man's situations deficient in itself, but it consists only of removing a factor that hinders the clear seeing of a given equation. The man is previously saved, by being one with God: the man

must only take notice of that. Naturally, the removal of the illusion that covers the fundamental situation implies long meditation and inward purification. The state of identity with God, by being a *de facto* state and in the same time a fundamental state, it can become also on the conscience's plan a permanent state, at least to the ascetics who were able to scatter the thicket of the illusion. Plotinus's mysticism, no matter how much was said as originating from Asia, it actually denotes through all its countenance that it could not appear but in the spiritual climate where it really occurred. In Plotinus's philosophy the man is not identical to God but the man is an altered, exterior, peripheral copy, or something degraded. Consequently, the state of union with God is not something previously given, but it obviously is an adding to a given situation, a result due to which the man exceeds on himself, or it is the effect of a substantial transformation, the victory of some human efforts setting in movement and in transformation the itself man's nature. The union's ecstasy, by being both a substantial and cognitive surpassing, it will not be something permanent; the ecstasy is only a happy moment of reaching, an exceptional state, a limit state, one rarely reached by mortals! Plotinus confessed that himself was the guest of the ecstasy only for four times in the entire his life. The rarity or the fever-intermittence of the mystical ecstasy it stood at Plotinus in direct connection with his conception about the interval that separated the man from God, about the arduous slope the man must climb in order to reach the unique principle. The distance placed between God and man was not at Plotinus but a collateral of the Greek conception on the ideas' reality: the ideas were not simple illusion as they were at Brahman Hindus. To Greeks, the ideas were cosmic factors endowed with the clearest existential accent! The ideas exist either in heavens or in concrete things. And from there comes the fact that the Greek, even when reaching the conception or a unique principle that is above categories, he cannot decide himself to dissolve the ideas in that unique principle, as some bronze statues in acid. The aspiration for seeing "types" everywhere - as structural trait of the Greek spirit – made impossible such a total dissolution of the ideas. Thus, Plotinus's mysticism was far from being identical to the Asian mysticism, and it took a countenance articulated to the measure of the Greek spirit and to the categorial determinants which condition this style. The true Greek will not even be forsaken by the feel of the Homeric-Platonic forms; he will live in a limited horizon populated with ideal plastic and static types, and when it happens him to reach up to a mystical conception, of man's union with the divine principle, the real Greek will

understand the mystical state only as an exceptional state, as a high and difficult (to be obtained, o. n.) fruit of the human life, that exceeds itself for an instance.

At Plotinus we find one of the most frequent symbols of the mysticism: the symbol of the light. In ecstasy state Plotinus felt on himself in the shininess of a transcendent light. Plotinus said: “One cannot know where the light has come from, from outside or from within, and when it stopped you will say: it was, therefore, within and still not within. You must not ask where it has come from: there is not a - from where -, for it does not come and it does not go, but it appears and it disappears. That is why you need not to force it, but you must quietly wait for it until it appears and you just prepare yourself in order to see it, as the eye waits for the sunrise”. The light as symbol of the ecstatic state, the light felt by the mortal as a heavenly drunkenness, it is a dominant symbol especially around Mediterranean Sea. These symbols is not used with equal insistence in the Brahman or in the Buddhism mysticisms, there the ecstasy being circumscribed more frequently through the symbol of the internal quietude, of the silence, of the ceasing of the life, of the emptiness, and of the negative.

Mysticism is a usual term fully contoured. The mysticism is reckoned as a doctrine of the state of union with God, of confounding the man to the absolute. It was thought that in the mystical states, by being about a real union or about a real contact with the absolute, the mysticism always and necessarily must be one, despite the language differences the mysticism is wrapped in. Contrary to this opinion, leaning on the theory of the spirit as also on a more attentive examination of the modes, we show that, on the opposite, there is no uniform mysticism, but there actually are a series of mysticism of an impressive variety of spirit. There are two causes for these variations of the mysticism. In the first place, despite all its declared claims plainly declared, the mysticism never represents a real union of the man with the absolute, and secondly, as anu other manifestation of the human creator spirit, the mysticism appears, inevitably and always, as stylistically structured. By blurring the divine dignity of the mysticism, we do not do else but increasing the human dignity.

THE GENERALIZED WONDER

At the urges of Archangel Gabriel, Mohammed (570-632 A.D.), the shepherd of camels, he founded the Islam. The naïve, the fantasist, the illiterate guardian of camel was invaded, without knowing how or why, by a faith which he was for, at least in the beginning, regarded with bewilderment, if not with worry, even by his familiars. Mohammed believed that he was chosen to be the center of some divine revelation processes. His imagination was palpitating in a horizon where the wonders were flourishing. The "revelations" or the "Korans" done through him, he felt himself guided to necessarily communicate them – and at any cost – to his fellow humans. With an amazing instinct, Mohammed guessed that the shape of the Korans must be solemn, and magical, and he found that in the Arabic disenchantments with their arisen and rhythmical prose. Dressed up like that, the Korans must create an atmosphere of spell. Mohammed recommended himself, with arguments and oaths, to his people, as a wonder decided to happen in the bosom of the Arab people, for God chose him as organ of the Korans, though he was only a poor servant, a guardian of beasts, an illiterate, and a nescient in all regards. In essence, we know that the divine revelation uttered through him was not quite original. But God is not required to always be original and inedited. The teaching next to which the Korans were formulated resembled much to the Mosaic and Persian teachings, having some Christian infiltrations as well. The end of the world, the resurrection of the dead, and the punishment for the human deeds composed, regarding the vision part, the nucleus of his messages somewhat enigmatically babbled. Once when he was speaking about the resurrection of the dead, somebody from audience - more sapient or joker – explained, mockingly, that such a thing is a nonsense. But Mohammed knew how to answer that the resurrection of the dead, regardless how impossible would seem, it is not a greater wonder than the plant's growing up out of the seed or than the conceiving of the child in his mother's womb. And that does not mean a diminution of the quality as miracle attributed to resurrection. Mohammed's answer wanted rather to say that the springing up of the plant out of seed and the conceiving of the child in his mother's womb are equally great wonders as the resurrection of the dead. Mohammed did not intend by any means to reduce the resurrection of the dead to some terms belonging to the natural science, but, on the contrary, he uttered a thought, or an intuition, that in essence the most natural things are wonders as well. The Islam actually breathes in an atmosphere of generalized wonder. The

wonder is not the exceptional in comparison to a natural order of the things, but everything taking place has the quality of a wonder. This must have been the diffuse and popular sentiment out of which were born the Islam and its philosophy and mystique. We are going to see how a whole philosophical thinking raised the *natural* fact to the rank of "miracle".

The rapid landslide-like success of the Islamic movement will be difficult to explain, if we do not take in account the belief if is promoters that through Mohammed's Korans was pronounced the most important and the clearest among God's revelations. Mohamed himself, as also the religious leaders who succeeded him, they ask everybody for unconditional "obedience" because in comparison to the value of the divine revelation everything falls on a second plan and the freedom of conscience no longer counts. From where it came also the desiderate of the bloody violence. One must impose the Korans even by using the force. The holy war destined to the penetration, to the spreading, and to instituting the Korans appears to the believers as a road or as a method approved by God Himself.

One of the most interesting points of the Islam is that regarding the lack of important of the individual as such. It seems that Islam's God thinks and calculated only by using the masses, with the tribes, with the nations, but not with the individuals. Actually, at the resurrection of the dead, each member will resurrect as a member of a tribe, of a nation, and in front of God's throne will present themselves the "nations" and not the isolated individuals. The Korans are understood as an appeal made by God to Mohammed, towards the Arab tribes, which were chosen to spread the teaching in the world and to accomplish the Islam. What is asked not only to the individual but to the entire Islamic nation it an activism up to violence, in order the Korans to be expanded in the world, in a struggle against the disbelief and against other beliefs which are not so consummate revelations as those conveyed through Mohammed. The final reward for such kind of deeds will be the participation after death and after resurrection to the inexhaustible pleasures from God's gardens populated with all splendors. Those pleasure were imagined by Mohammed in the likeness of the most usual earthly pleasures which the body and all senses rejoice of, but having much greater proportions and lasting forever.

The Islamic religiousness appears sometimes as a sentiment of obeying one's will and the human soul to the unpredictable order wanted by the will, one actually arbitrary, of a God Who Himself is not tied by any law because His mode of manifestation is rather that of the generalized miracle.

The Islamic philosophy took care, of course, of sublimating and making more subtle many of the images springing out of rather fevered imagination of Mohammed who, son of his people, he spoke to his people. But even the most abstract philosophy, even the Islamic mysticism, despite their high spiritual qualities, they will be forever influenced by the heat of the symbols contrived by Mohammed's imagination.

About the theological and philosophical thinking and about the mystical intuitions of the Islam there is little known in Europe. The centuries-long concurrence between Islam and Christendom determined the medieval European thinkers to disfigure everything that belonged to Islam. Most often, sch thinkers were not able to ne enough subtle in order to notice and follow the very abstract arabesques of the Islamic thinking. The European researchers who sporadically attempted to occupy themselves with the forms of the Islamic thinking, they started that by using the tools of the European philosophy: Greek, Latin, Christian, Westers, or, in extreme cases, Hindu, and situated thus, they rather reached the conclusion that the Islamic philosophy would be a syncretic, confuse, and incoherent conglomerate. A more perseverant and more generous research on the Islamic thinking would reach a totally different conclusion. On the Islam's influence field there were striving themselves many great thinkers who can be compared to anyone else without getting overshadowed (Al-Farabi, Avicenna, Shirazi etc.) and the mystique produced, at its turn, a flora among the most luminous ones. No one will seriously blame the Islamic thinking because of coming later than the important systems of India, centuries after Plato or Plotinus, or even after the Christian doctrine crystalized in the collective work of the Holy Fathers. The themes originating in Brahmanism, in Buddhism, in Parsism, in Judaism, and in Christendom, they doubtlessly can be found in the Islamic thinking and mystique. We have ascertained that not the filiation of the themes presents any interest, but the fact that they have been really assimilated, or not, by the human mentality and substance from a certain region. The severest justice sense forces us to admit that related to the capital problems of the human spirit Islam occupies a singular position different from all others. In the first place, we must notice that in *Koran* and in the always religious thinking that is always theocentric to the Islam, the doctrine about the divine revelation finds itself a splendid development more than everywhere else. Actually, the Islamic thinking appears to us as an endless unfolding, very baroque and full of variations, on the fundamental theme of the "divine revelation". This is because, according to the Islamic thinking, divine revelation is not only the teaching contained by *Koran*; divine

revelations are all the religious doctrines of all peoples, but only that those are unequal as value. Finally, according to Islamic thinking everything is divine revelation, even the usual knowledge about the world, and then the world as well. The gnoseology and the cosmology are actually simple chapters of a doctrine of vast range about the divine revelation. How did they reach there? God is supposed to be, by His nature: hidden, inaccessible to the creatural beings, as an unseen treasure. But God does not want to remain hidden, but He wants to show Himself outwardly. God feels the need for revealing Himself, for getting extrovertive. It would be useful to the limited creatures that God showed Himself as He is, because of the creature do not have the necessary organ to perceive Him. Consequently, in order to communicate Himself, in order to make Himself visible to the limited beings, God accommodate Himself to the knowledge conditions and possibilities of the limited beings, namely of the man. How does God obtain this result? By putting on a visible vestment. The first coat put on by God in order to show Himself, according to the perceiving faculties of the limited creatures, it is the light. This light is the original luminosity previous to the sun and to the stars. By advancing one more step in developing the doctrine on the revelation, they will say that, at their turn, all the limited things and beings are, as in the original light, manifestations of God in order to make Himself visible, in order to make Himself accessible to the knowledge faculties possible to the limited being, by and large. Lor God showed Himself to Moses in the countenance of a flame in a thorns bush. God put on the vestment of the flame in the thorns bush in order to adapt Himself to the organic, natural possibilities of Moses, so that Moses could be able to know Him. This image illustrates, according to the Islamic thinking, a universal situation. In reality, all things and beings are such thorns bushes which the showing of God burns in. This though is the cornerstone or the ground of most of Islam's theological and mystical thinking systems. This is, in the same time, the though which the really unique Islam's spiritual position is defined by. We do not need to differentiate this singular position relatedly to Platonism or to Parsism, the differences being too striking for there to be any room for confusion. But there is needed a very deep differentiation from Gnostics and Neoplatonists, and from Brahmanism. In the Brahman doctrines God-Brahman is the world's impersonal and unique substrate, that id diversified in phenomena. The concreted world with all its phenomena is equal to an illusion, to a play, to a dream, to a contrivance of Brahman. The world is Maya, a meaningless hallucination worthy to actually be despised. Maya does not deserve the man's attachment and therefore the wiseman withdraws

himself from within world. In the Neoplatonist doctrines the world is a degraded product, one produced through emanation from God Who is the Unique above any attributes. The world is neither an illusion nor a dream, but the world is a direct and indirect emanation having its own modes of existence. In emanation the divine model is only altered. In Neoplatonism as well, the attitude towards the world is quite negative, in the sense that the man must restore within himself the similitude to and the unity with God, by climbing the slope of the divine decadence. Here the negativism related to the world implies the separate existence of the world and its possibility to be divinely restored. Totally different is the position of the Islamic thinking, to whom the world appears as a "vestment" of God and not as a simple, illusory and meaningless play, but as a dressing up, as an intentional and meaningful act. God wants to make Himself visible, accessible to the finite creatures, but as the finite creatures are themselves parts of the world, one could affirm that God created the world simply for He wants to show Himself, to reveal Himself, even to the creatures created by Himself. We ascertain at the basis of this a divine thirst, an initial intention, to show Himself in finite conditions. The universal revelation circumscribes a godhead's purpose, from where it follows that the world, though being only a vestment, it enjoys in the Islamic philosophy the accent of a consecration. The world is not meaningless, as an illusion, or as a degraded existence, as in Brahmanism and in Neoplatonism, but here the world is the fully affirmed term of a divine intention. The Islam rather tends to enjoy the world and it does not cultivate the ascetic despise towards the world. (Of course, there are some Islamist mystics who realized that God, by creating the world as a simple vestment of His, He does not add by that anything to His own essence, so that the real situation is like the world has not even been created at all. One could notice also that the attitude those mystics manifested towards life was different than in Brahmanism and in Buddhism). We have tried to underscore, in a self-standing profile, the fundamental idea of the Islamic thinking, in comparison to other positions which the Islamic thinking has never been separated from with full clarity. In Islam the world is reckoned as an intentional revelation of God, as a vestment intentionally put on, as a result of a divine conscious adaptation as such. Namely: the inaccessible God, the hidden treasure, the One Who is without beginning and borderless, He adapts Himself, condescendingly, to the conditions of the finite, by putting on forms and modes accessible to the cognitive faculties possible in the conditions of the finite. Sucha conception of a remarkable subtlety on the report between God and the world was possible in an Islamic environment, only because the mentality from there was

deeply convinced about the general presence of the miracle. God, as miracles author, He also accomplished the greatest miracle, namely He is able to make accessible, in the conditions of the finite His inaccessible – by definition – being. But why does God want to reveal Himself at any costs? This question has remained unanswered by the Islamic philosophy. It was only said that God's will is arbitrary and it is not tied by any law or causality. This can be reckoned as a simulacre of an answer. While in Spinosa's philosophy God cannot change the angles' sum from a triangle, the Islamic thinking conceived a God Who can show Himself in the conditions of the finite and that is only because imperiously wants, and with untold ardor, to show Himself, as remaining hidden would be something undignified. We cannot tell if we have succeeded in our previous considerations to highlight, as we wanted, the basic thought of the Islamic philosophy and mystique, in comparison to Brahmanism and Neoplatonism. We think that could be readers unsatisfied by our endeavor and who would conclude that we have been debating an unimportant nuance, one made, in the end, for the minds accustomed to split the thread into four. We conclude the opposite. But in the metaphysical problems there are laid down the ultimate grounds of the conceptions about world and life, and therefore such nuances detested by the adversaries of any scholastics are especially important, and that is for simple nuances can have incommensurable consequences. Such a simple nuance that falls like a snowball that causes, in the end, an avalanche of incredible proportions. An honest and responsible researcher on the history of the metaphysics, he will pay attention, therefore, right to such nuances, which often are the clue explaining the greatest historical movements, and they are not, by any means, unimportant.

We are mentioning here some other differences between the Islamic mystique on one hand and the Brahmanism and Neoplatonism on the other hand. In the Islamic mystical conception, we have told that God is conceived as dominated not only by the intention but even by the thirst – almost a drunkenness – to show Himself, to dress Himself up, in order to show Himself. But God does not put on only one vestment, but He puts on a multitude of vestments one upon another. The Islam incorporated its antique gnostic conception on the pluri-spherical composition of the world. Between God and the man there are intercalated the spheres, in a great number, with their populations of beings, sometimes more diaphanous, while sometimes more tenebrous. But the spheres are understood as a series of vestments which God wants to make Himself seen and known through. The spheres are not reckoned as some emanations of fatally degraded existence in report with their source, as it is the case in Neoplatonism. To Brahman the

world represents, somehow, a sole illusory veil laid over Brahman, as a dream, as a game, as a meaningless emission of Brahman Himself. In Neoplatonism is absent the idea of intentional vestment of the Divinity, while in Brahman is absent the idea of multiple stratification of the world behind which stratification there is God. On the other hand, while in Islam God's vestment is illusory, we must add that the vestment as it is it is wanted by God Himself Who only thus will accomplish His intention of showing Himself, and we also must add that the vestment is not one but it is multiple (according to some Islamic thinkers God has put upon Himself seventy thousand veils of light). In Neoplatonism the intermediary emanations between God and man, namely the logos, the world of the ideas, the world's soul and other beings, they are successive degraded copies of the divine being. The emanations are not illusory, for they are separate existences, fatal, only more imperfect; they are not destined to reveal God through a supposed vestment function. To all listed particularities the Islamic doctrine added one more: the idea of the creation of the world. This particularity is had in common by Islam and Judeo-Christendom. The world with all its spheres and stratifications is not an emanation out of the divine substance, neither it is a simple dream of God, but it is a creation through initial acts, a creation out of nothing, and therefore it is an ensemble of *wonders*. By taking a detour and by crossing through difficult thickets, we have reached thus to a point mentioned by us in the beginning, namely at Islam's saturated with wonders horizon. But as well in report with the Jude-Christendom we need to make a distinction. To Judeo-Christendom the world with its creatures is a creation out of nothing, but creation in sense of "work" *meant to have a relative purpose in itself*, while to the Islamic doctrine the world with all its creatures is creation out of nothing in the sense of a "vestment" and *having a function with its center in God, a purely revelator function*. (We are not going to further insist upon the greatly consequential dogmatic differences between Islam and Christendom).

The mistics from everywhere aspire, as we know, to directly experience the divinity, by claiming that in the particular ecstasy state one would obtain the desired union. One barely can contradictorily discuss with the mystiques because they accompany their ecstasy states with the sentiment of a supreme certitude, in comparison to which the usual certitudes of the experience and of the daily or philosophical thinking come on a second plan. Such a contradictory discussion will be impossible as long as the mistics place themselves outside rationality's law and outside a certain sense of the reality. The exodus from within our world that the mistics

assume, in their proceeding towards God, it still not gives us the right of affirming that the mistics would be some people always deserted by the sense of the reality and liberated from the constraints of the logics. It is true that the mistics speak to us about their ecstasy states always in very paradoxical terms. As Lao-Tzi said: “the words of the truth seem to be turned inside-out”. Let’s not forget that there are some great mistics who proved themselves to be not only vigorous realists but also sovereign masters of the logics. Not only once, the mystical thinking attempted to go hand in hand with the most severe, the most lucid, and the most subtle rational thinking. I for one, I do not think even for an instant to doubt about the existence of some mystical states, but we saw in them not as much an experience of the absolute but rather a creation of the human spirit. We have just mentioned the sentiment of supreme certitude which the mistics find their ecstasy states accompanied by. In our study we are going to have other occasions to demonstrate that the mistics’ aspiration towards their union with God, as also the sentiment of certitude with a particular intensity characteristic to the ecstatic achievement, it is actually diversified in variants which finally depend on culture’s spiritual coordinates and stylistic categories, which the mystical phenomenon takes place in. But the mistics present their state as those states of theirs would totally get then out of any correlation with the world and with the history. The mystical states of claimed union with God would be cosmical and supra-historical states. Behold an affirmation that does not quite persuade us, regardless how great interest and value we grant to the mentioned states.

We are now in front of the Islamic mysticism, and we are going to reveal some other aspects which are going to highlight once more the fact that the mystical states as well are achieved within the historical and stylistic conditions - which are so variable - of the human spirit, and which do not present any particularity that would get them out of this relativity.

What takes place like, according to the two mystical doctrines compared by us in this chapter, the process of union with God?

To a Brahman this process is accomplished through the lucidly upheld knowledge that the senses’ world is illusory. The mystical process coincides to the act of awake conscience of the fact that the man is from always and previously identical to God. The union state is always available to the ascetic who has withdrawn himself from within the world and who does not live any longer except for contemplation. The state of union is for the Brahman mystique the existence’s fundamental state, and the state of union is a given state, only that is covered by the

veil of the stupid illusions. To Neoplatonism the man in his aspiration for union with God must climb, through efforts of substantial purification, in order to be restored within the man, gradually, the divine model. The man is not one with God but the man can reach the union with God through efforts, through ascesis, on very rare moments. This time the state of union is reckoned as an exception, as a difficult result. The Islamic mystical, at his turn, he imagines that what separated him from God is an indefinite multiplicity of vestments, of shells, which do not belong to the divinity's essence and they neither are derived from the divine substance, but they are simply a creation out of nothing. The Islamic mystic still believes that the union with God can become a fact, namely due to a "miracle" produces by God Himself within the man's soul, through illumination. The mystical incandescence is this time declared as a magical miracle, as a wonder. The man if free to prepared himself in order to achieve the mystical state, but the mystical state cannot be achieved either by knowledge or by effort – the mystical state is waited for as a miracle. But the idea of miracle is indissolubly tied to the arbitrary and unpredictable. A miracle can happen at any time, but it does not admit prediction. By and large, the mystical states found in the Islamic literature a multitude of original expression among the most powerful (mistics as Ibn Arabi, Hallag, Gunald, they can be compared in any aspect to the chief mystics belonging to other cultures). To the Islamic mystique only God is the true existence, because the world is only a vestment, and the vestment, as something created out of nothing, it still is a nothing. The world does not represent, in any aspect, an adding to God's substance. The world appears to the Islamic mystique, from this point of view, as a nothing, and this is even stronger than in case of Maya at the Brahman thinkers. Rightly so, Maya is presented as an illusory substance, as a playful and temporary emission from the real substance of God. While to the Islamic mystique the sum of the existence is permanently that of God before creating the world, because by creating the world God only made a coat to show Himself, but God did not add anything to His being, neither God emitted anything out of His substance. The Islamist mystic, when describing the state of union with God, a state of individual annulation and of overpouring into God, he will use symbols and perspectives extracted from Islamic cosmology and metaphysics. The man's mystical state or reckoned not as much as a man's state, but as God's state itself, namely as God's state before He created the world. Therefore, the mystic hopes for being reconstituted within himself, due to a miracle, the divine pre-creational state. As the creature has been made through a miracle, as a creation made by God out of nothing, there

actually appears a counter-wonder. It is obvious that the Islamic mystics reach by that to a total devaluation of the world. The Islamic mystic declares himself ready to renounce to God's benevolence that takes finite forms of it puts own vestments, due to God's condescendence, in order to show Himself, because the Islamic mystic prefer that God from before creation. The world with everything within the world do not have at least the price or "the weight of a mosquito's little wing". After such degradation we would expect a total running aways of the Islamic mystic from within world. But we characterized at the beginning of the present chapter the Islamic spirit as having strong activistic inclinations. What is reconciled like the depreciation of the world reached by the Islamic mystics, with this activism? He who frequented the diverse mankind's cultures, he will know what paradoxical are, often, the spiritual phenomena. We are not once more in front of a such a phenomenon. The Islamic mystics are complacent in a total depreciation of the world, by affirming that the world has not even the weight of a mosquito's little wing, but they still do not reach to negate the "activism", but even on the contrary. The Brahmans, by negating the world's value, and the life's value implicitly, they draw a negative ethical consequence in favor of nonaction: the withdraw themselves from within world. The Neoplatonists, by despising the corporeality, they reach, in a very Greek spirit, to an ideal of spiritual self-perfectioning. But the Islamic mystique produces another ideal: that ideal of the heroic generosity. If the world and the goods from within world do not value even as much as a mosquito's wing, you will have to know how to sacrifice yourself for others, without any regret, even to sacrifice your own life. The highest expression and consequence of ethical nature of the mystical state is therefore, to Islam, the heroic generosity. The postulate of the heroic generosity which the Islamic mystique pleads for, it is in perfect agreement with the activism characteristic to the Islamic spirit, and it clearly separated itself from the rather quietist inclinations belonging to the most mysticisms from everywhere. The brahman withdraws himself from within the world. The Buddhist overpours himself into the metaphysical void. Lao-Tzi's follower proposes the nonaction and the integration within the existence's rules. The Neoplatonist is preoccupied with his spiritual consummation. The Islamic mystic searcher for sacrificing himself for another. The Islamic mystique contributes thus, at its turn, to highlighting the specific Islamic religiousness. By and large, the Islamic religiousness excels through more logics of the imagination fueled by a unanimous presence of the miracle. The imaginative logic of the Islamic religiousness if very different form the organic logics characteristic to Lao-Tzi, from the

monumentally simplified logics of Parsism, from the classical logic of the Greeks, as also from the ascetic logics of Hindus.

THE UNCREATED LIGHT, THE BIRTH OF THE LOGOS

Regarding the Christendom, because of being much better known its forms, we do not need to proceed to a detailed study. Besides, we haven't intended at all to make an exposition, either historical or systematical, of the religions. Guided by this precise goal, we are characterizing only a few modes of the religiousness. They will serve us ads material and as pretext for making some philosophical considerations related to religion by and large, and to the way which the religious values are constituted in. By taking heed at the oikonomia of the work, we refuse to extent our research to much in a domain requiring the attention and the material interest of the specialists. He who searches for an exposition of the religious doctrines, he will surely be able to find it in so many studies written everywhere. The available information in this regard is exceedingly vast. Being about Christendom, we ought to choose from the material available to anybody, especially some moments which are underscored almost by themselves, in comparison to the aspects we have shown in the previous chapters. Unquestionably, the mystique is one of the extremist religious modes, and it is a mode cultivated by many of the past and present cultures. The mystique is not the most-frequent religious mode, but it is one of the most-interesting in all its aspects.

We haven't ever dared to affirm that the official Christian Church would have ever regarded with a special sympathy the aspirations of the religious mystique, not even when the Church was one, neither later on when the Church got split in multiple confessions. On the contrary, the mystique's preoccupations have been considered by the official churches with much reserve, and they even were often severely condemned, due to their slidings towards beliefs which were in open disagreement with some consecrated Christendom's dogmas. Something similar happened in the frame of Islam as well, but seemingly less manifest as in the Christian lands. Of course, both Islamic and Christian official doctrines remained dominant, and they channeled, with much authority, the religious life, on the tracks of a faith that does not necessarily aim to the man's union with God, but that faith only establishes a particular report

between man and God as two totally separate realities. We will have the occasion to talk about this mode of religiousness as well, one mode that is more frequent than the mystical mode. Still, the Brahman mystique from India or the Buddhist mysticism have been ever considered, in their country, as full achievements of the religious life, despite there being as well the wide masses are unable to such type of religiousness. While at Hindu the mysticism is a norm of the religious life, in the antique and Christian Europe and in Islam, the mysticism is rather reckoned as an exceptional phenomenon.

In the previous chapters we have tarried upon several variants of the mysticism. It belongs to the natural order of the things to take in consideration the Christian mystique as well. A study having no time constraints, it would discover also in the vast garden of the Christendom not a sole mystique, by many and among the most various. It is right that the mystique always aims to the same target: the ecstasy state which they claim that the man's union with God takes place in, but the mystique is equally variously structured and in as many forms as the art is – if we are allowed to take art as referential. It would be very easy to us if we quoted from mystics who expressed themselves in the language of the baroque, or the classicism, of the romanticism, or even of the symbolistic impressionism. But it is not only about the way the mystics express themselves. Their doctrines themselves vary as articulation and structure, according to the style that determined the whole spiritual life. All the more we must suppose that there is a Christian mystique built within the coordinates of the Easters Byzantine style, or within the Western Gothic coordinates. We are going to treat in a few words on the most important representatives of the Eastern and Western mystiques.

Around the year 500 A.D. are for the first time mentioned the writings of an unknown theologian issued under the false name as Dionysus the Areopagite. Dionysus's writings compose the ground and almost the sum of the mystique of Orthodox orientation. The influence of the unknown theologian was immense both in East and in the West. For a long time, the philosophical historians manifested quite an opaqueness towards the imposing apparition. This unforgettable undervaluation can be explained only by the fact that the historians search for an originality of the ideas, in a domain where the originality is blurred by the force of the circumstances. Any mystique is upheld by a structure of ideas, but the mystique mostly depends on the man's spiritual *existence* that on man's theoretical thinking. So that are being used some quite inadequate criteria when asking the mystics, in the first place, for an originality of their

ideas. That is like asking the poets not to always talk about love, nature, and death. The mystique's object is even more restricted than that of the poetry, because the mystique exclusively refers itself to the spiritual union of the human soul with God. In this direction the theorization has not such a vast space in order to present its variations. Still, the great mystics always find new and powerful expressions in order to make us partakers to their vision and feeling. Therefore, the originality on mystical realms will be an originality of expression, or spiritual coordinates, of depth or height of the feeling, of horizon's vastness, and that means that here the originality has, more than elsewhere, an ineffable character. Behold why one of Dionysus the Areopagite's merits is that of having conveyed the mystical states in Christian coordinates. When he wrote the mystique on Christian staves, the Christian dogmatics was, in its nuclei, already constituted, so that all he could do was to bring, as plus, rather the heat due to which the dogmatic abstractions achieved mystical embodiment and incandescence. As he was not left with too many dogmatic categories to crystalize, he satisfied his speculative thirst – which he was not missing at him – by writing the "heavenly hierarchy", namely a systematic study on angels. He was the first to attempt a taxonomy of the superior ghosts, and he consecrated himself to this operation with a warm passion as that of an entomologist who classified, for the first time, the butterflies. From Dionysus we have the *linné*-an system of the beings placed between man and God, with their classes and nomenclature: the cherubs, the seraphs, the thrones; the masteries, the powers, and the forces; the principalities, the archangels, and the angels. But above all, what kindled and winged up Dionysus the Areopagite, was the mystical theology, namely eth doctrine on the man's immersion into God's light of "supra-light". Right his meditations regarding the mystical processes were accused of not doing else but copying Neoplatonist texts. We are going to prove that such an affirmation is at least an exaggerated one. In the first place, the mysticism experiences at Dionysus an adaptation to the Christian dogma. Dionysus built on the foundation of the Trinitarian conception about God. In divinity is admitted a process of unfolding, of filiation, out of eternal, intra-Trinitarian. The Father, the Logos, and the Holy Ghost are equal Hypostases, from eternity, of God, Hypostases Who still form a sole substance. As Neoplatonists the Logos is only a degraded copy of the Unique, namely a first step in the process which the world is produced in, on an emanative way. Then, Dionysus the Areopagite also highlights the idea that the sensitive world is the result of a creator act, out of nothing, and not a last product of some emanations out of God, as argued by

Neoplatonists. Once he reached here, Dionysus remembered also about the Neoplatonist emanationism. He incorporated this idea as well, but he did that without altering the dogmatic system. And he did not see what in the world could forbid him from this enriching of the Christian doctrine. Dionysus imagined the existence of some *effluvia of divine light*, which are overpoured ceaselessly out of God upon the created world. The divine light if not of physical nature, but it is supra-natural, and that light is destined to "transfigure" the creatures. The things could be imagined like this: the divine light cerates as a magnetic field, which the creatures achieve in, a secret connection with God. Places within the magnetic field of the divine world, the creatures are transfigured, namely are "deified". The divine light overpoured upon the world is added to the created world, or it might be that the world was created, from the beginning, in this environment that is crossed by the force lines of the divine world. We are attempting to give Dionysus's ideas as much as concrete countenance we are able to, in on this purpose we resort to us some images and terms taken from out time's physics. But the modern images and terms which we take shelter at, they facilitate to a great extend the understanding of Dionysus's system, by their illustrative power. The creatures are transfigured by being crossed through by longing for the turning back to God. All creatures are dominated by this nostalgia, and all the more so is the man. The turning back and the union with God are possible to the man due to the divine light that descends. There is nothing more "Eastern" in Christian sense, than this conception of Dionysus; this conception matches the Hagia Sophia Catedral from Constantinople. Dionysus's chief preoccupation were the mystical methods and the technique for man's immersion into God. The recommended technique consisted of ascetical renunciation to the worldly goods and pleasures, in spiritual focusing, in prayer.

MYSTICAL STATE AND FAITH

Until now we have been occupying ourselves mostly with some mystical forms of the religiousness. The reason why we have been doing that have been only that of proving, by giving a few examples, the fact that the religiousness, even under the mode claimed as escaping the human conditions, it is actually submitted to some conditions as well. The mystical religiousness experiences, as any other creation of the human spirit, the template of those stylistic categories

providing the human history with its magnificent relativeness. But beside the mystical variants which are, doubtlessly so, extremist, there is also a more frequent religiousness, one having a usual countenance, one that can be sometimes equally burning and profound as the mystique is, but one that avoids the aspiration of union between soul and God reckoned by this type of religiousness either impossible or a sacrilege. This religiousness takes the countenance of a simple "faith", and this is a mode susceptible of most diverse degrees of intensity and complexity. The faith as souly state and as spiritual act it implies rather a report between man and God as beings always remaining exterior to one another. The religiousness we encounter everywhere at our fellow humans, it belongs to the type of the faith. The "faith" does not necessarily mean moderate religiousness as well. It is true that the reduced religious exigencies of the average people, it finds a satisfaction especially within the frames of the faith, while the mystique requires, obviously, an exceptional religious capacity. But, also the religiousness of faith type can have extreme tensions. In order to illustrate the power which sometimes the faith raises at, we are often served the example of the proto-patriarch Abraham who, when tried, he was able to proceed to sacrifice his son Isaac. Abraham's faith is by no means the aspiration of the man to united himself with God, but it is the souly state and the spiritual act due to which the man obeys, maybe sufferingly and unwillingly, but still trustful, the will of God. If the mystical aspirations can give birth to so many variants, it is natural to the faith to take all kinds of countenances. It is not too difficult us to show that the forms of the faith, at their turn, are determined by the immense diversity of the spiritual styles. We have been seeing until here, for instance in the frame of Zarathustra's Parsism, where the religiousness does not manifest mystical tendencies and it does not have an obvious faithful tournure, to what extent this faith accepts the profound templates of the Persian spirit. The immeasurable horizon, the expansion towards horizon, the optimism, the dramatism, those are as many factors constituting the structure of the Persian religiousness. This circumstance did not impede Zarathustra to declare his teaching as revealed by Ormazd himself. There are many religions founded on the idea that their teaching was revealed by God. But this does not mean, in the last instance, but the fact that the people – and even the authors of the respective doctrines – are immune to the deeper stylistic aspects of the respective doctrines. A regardless who brief stylistic analysis done on the religious doctrines will just demonstrate the relativity related to the human and historical conditions of the claimed divine revelations. All analyses of this sort converge towards the same conclusion: a

there is no divine revelation by and large, or, if there is a divine revelation that will be so much adapted to the human conditions than it becomes equally variable as the creations and as the doctrines of exclusive human provenance.

Some of the strongest faith crystallizations took place within the frame of the Parsism, of Judaism, of Islam, of Christendom and so on. It falls to us the task of demonstrating that the faith as well is constituted in a relativity of stylistic nature.

It will suffice if we turn our gaze within ourselves, towards the archaeological layers of our soul, in order to resurrect the religious atmosphere of the *Old Testament*. The biblical thoughts about Genesis, about the ghost of God hoovering upon waters, about the creation of the whole through a series of miraculous acts, about the creation of the man, about Paradise, about the falling into sin and about the banishing away of the first people from Paradise, about the multiplication of the mankind, and about the destruction of the mankind by Flood – all these themes, and many others, they need only to be mentioned in order to wake up within us deep echoes of subterranean volts.

The Jews who wrote the books of the *Old Testament* preserving and cultivating the *Scripture*, they saved from the old Mesopotamian cultures a series of archaic mythological themes which, conveyed to the European peoples, they immensely fructified their cultures.

In the phase of the prehistory, lost in the common atmosphere created in Asia Minor through the expansion of the archaic Sumerian-Chaldean and Babylonian cultures, the Jews were a polytheistic population. Even only in the implied meanings, enigmatic at first glance, of the first commandment inscribed by Moses on the *Law Tablets*, one can intuit the struggle the first and the greatest prophet of the Jews was forced to wage in order to consolidate the monotheism. "I am Lord Your God; you shall not have any other gods except Me". For his spiritual activity, without any doubt, Moses found the ground prepared by a patriarchal tradition. This is for, according to tradition, long, very long before Moses, there would have laid the foundations of that specifically Jewish religion of "contractual" nature, between Jehovah and his chosen people, Israel. Let's give back to contractual religions the meaning it really had. The analyzed religion, understood as a covenant between Israel and Jehovah, it was not, in the beginning, a monotheism of most clean essence. Its core was still hinting to a polytheistic background. This phenomenon slightly resembled to henotheism. We know that in his prayer the Vedic man addressed himself to a god chosen out of the great multitude of gods, as only that god would have existed, and this

favorite god accumulated all virtues and feats of all the other gods. At the old Jews, we can ascertain some similitudes of circumstance, but placing the accent elsewhere. Jehovah is reckoned by the tribes of Israel as a unique God, but as there would have been other gods as well. Which were the other gods? In the first place, the gods of the other peoples. Jehovah seems dominated by the care for imposing Himself as a unique God, by the fact that he chooses a people, Israel. Israel obtains the warranty and the promise of an unparalleled situation in the world, by vowing allegiance to Jehovah. This is like Jehovah, in order to become the unique God, He needed the exclusive faith of a people, or Israel. And the covenant between Israel and Jehovah was contractually concluded, on the ground of the principle: "I am giving you, in order you to give me".

The Hebrew monotheism, initially sketched on a polytheistic background, it became thinner later on, so that it raised itself on its own line. It achieved an indestructible figure grace to the prodigious activity, sometime fearsome, always stormy, of the prophets. The prophets' soul is the oven for purifying and for hardening the divinity idea. Through prophets' activity a rare process of spiritualization finds its accomplishment, by removing the anthropomorphism from mythology, as much as possible, and by totally extirpating the zoomorphism. The prophets think about themselves as being some kind of organs of God Who insists to unveil Himself, intermittently, to the chosen people. They were steadfast defenders of the sacred covenant concluded between Israel and Jehovah. When the people forget about it, and that happened quite often by falling into the swirl of the lawlessness, Jehovah warned them by sending one prophet at a time, who shook them up and who reminded them about the contract, by using terrible words which menaced the blood and the seed of Israel for eternity. The strife of the prophets with the people's sins was of an unimaginable, elementary, and dramatic pathos. But the prophets were prophets rather due to another side of their activity, namely due to the accents which they heralded with the plan God followed to bring to victory within world. By this side of the prophetic activity came to existence the Messianic myth, that myth having its face turned towards future, or a Messiah, or an envoy and servant of God, who was finally to come. The messianic myth refers equally much to the destiny of the chosen people as also to an eschatological future – the end of the world. Frequent messianic allusions, references, and announcements, we can find especially in the verses of the Psalmist and in the revelations of Prophet Isaiah. For them who like comparisons, we are mentioning here that in the archaic

Mesopotamian cultures the myth of the Savior was very widespread and it was cultivated with special fervor. We have to mention, though, that in the Babylonian culture the myth of the Savior had tight connections with the cyclical and astral conception about the ongoing of the cosmic and historic events. At the end of each great cosmic year, our world collapses, a fresh divinity takes over the leading of the destinies and he saves the existence by building up a new world on the remains of the old world. Such a Savior, whom a universal refreshing started from, it was, for instance, God Marduk, whose cult was authoritatively centralized in the wonderful city of Babylon. The messianic theme had in the Babylonian religion an undeceiving astral, circular-cosmological, mythological-divine, massive-gigantesque, and dehumanized character. In the Babylonian conception the world comes to existence, it lasts for a while, it decays, it collapses, and then a god, one of many, it assumed the role of world's savior, and it gives birth to a new order out of the remnants of the broken one. Sand this game starts again from the beginning, according to a huge calendar divided in four universal years. This myth is of an unparalleled monumentalism and it has an astral-chronometric countenance. The messianic theme appears to Hebrews as much humanized being, before all, related to the history of the man and to the history of certain tribes. At Jews the messianic theme has not a cyclical, cosmological, and astral character. The destiny of the chose people is of interest in the first and in the last line. Messiah will come for the chose people and for instituting a definitive situation. So, the messianic theme appears at Jews as consummately adapted to the spiritualistic and monotheistic kind of religion: God is one, Messiah likewise, and the end of the world will be Their triumph once and forever. Messiah's singular triumph will not be followed by a new decline or by a new falling, as in the Babylonian cyclical conception, where the cosmical years with their world and with their saviors follow to one another with the chronometrical regularity and precision or the astral movements and of the zodiacal changes. The messianic myth as Jews, as humanized, as historicized, as singularized, and as solidarized as it is with the man's destiny and especially with the destiny of the chosen people, it supposes a background a religious of contractual nature. Of course, the messianic myth uttered by prophets with verbosity, but only in non-contoured visions, and in difficult to understand allusions, it did not find, in their announcements, a crystallization far from any equivocal. Thus, the most diverse hopes searched for a valve in that myth whose main collaborator became the time with its disasters. The theme of the cosmical Savior from the Babylonian culture is, as we said, dehumanized. These saviors are gods, they do not know except

triumphant roads. The Psalmist and the Prophet Isaiah herald the apparition of a future Messiah who will experience sufferings and humiliations. The messianic theme is here profoundly humanized, and once uttered, it was destined to a secular growth. The atmosphere of messianic waiting constantly intensified, so that around the birth of Jesus of Nazareth it must had taken, sometimes, proportions of spiritual fever. Influenced by the sentiment that the events were precipitating. John the Baptist announced the imminence of Messiah's coming, or that one who "will baptize with water *and with spirit*". In those close to River Jordan counties, and towards West from Dead Sea, there must have been many human settlements, hamlets, and hearths, which the fire of the waiting was burning in. A myth, warmed up by the increasing heat of the souls for hundreds of years, it had to finally take a body. In this atmosphere of feverish exaltation took place a historical fact of totally exceptional importance. The messianic myth really took possession of a human being, experiencing a historical reality. The life of Jesus of Nazareth told by Evangelists has, of course, in very many concerns, a countenance of a myth. From where some people hurried to conclude that Jesus would have not ever existed as a real historical person. But Jesus's life is mythically configured for it was the identical accomplishment of a myth that charged the expectations of all hamlets for so many centuries. The myth, created in order to be fulfilled, it *had to* be fulfilled, immediately that a being had the power to bring it to fulfillment. There must have been, in the same time, so many failed Christs, who were taken over by the messianic aspiration and who said: "I am! I am the promised one!" – but on the next day to understand that they had not the power required by such a destiny and that they were nothing but some losers.

There was made a distinction between Jesus's religion and the religion which Jesus has become to, its religious subject. The distinction is allowed, but the borders between these two are very imprecise. Jesus's religion is circumscribed by the idea of a God as Father of the world, by the idea of a filial report founded on immeasurable love between man and the Father from heavens, by the idea that the earthly life will be transformed into a kingdom of God, by the idea that the people among themselves, even the enemies, they are all brothers, by the idea that the miracle is possible, but above any miracle there is the miracle of loving your neighbor, a miracle gushing up within man.

The religions which the person of Jesus has become - in a way or another - subject of cult to, it divinizes itself the apparition of Jesus. To this process Apostle Paul contributed in the most

fecund manner. Concomitantly to the deification of the historical apparition of Jesus of Nazareth, a new center of religious life was declared, a knot of spiritual irradiation unparalleled into the mankind's history. The religious earthquake started form there recoiled all over Planet Earth, and it has been unfolded until these days under the most diverse embodiments. The religious life, through the variants of the faith, and the religious life as mystical aspiration, they flourished multiply and complexly, through most bright representatives also within the border of the Christendom. For many times, the two ways of religious life, the faith and the mystique, they tolerated on one another and they went in parallel, and sometimes they came in a wonderful confluence, as within Apostle Paul's soul and spirit. On other occasions, the two forms of the spiritual life combated with one another, aiming to remain only one on the field. To many, the mystical theology is rather a religious anomaly. There are theologians of certain spiritual vocation who reckon the mystical state as too amorphous a state, a state implying too less controllable premises so that to be transformed in a pivot of the religious life. Once more, the mysticism, when we present its real signification of aspiration of the soul towards the union with God, it will not represent an ideal accepted as such by all religious people. No one will argue, regardless to what extent the confessionalism steams up the sight, that, for instance, Luther was not a profoundly religious man. Well, Luther spoke with obvious despise about the mystical ecstasies, which he contested any importance to. Luther, and in this regard Calvin as well, they understood the religiousness under the form of the "faith", *as spiritual act concluded in itself*. They disregarded the mystique as a simple inconsistent phenomenon. Therefore, while the mysticism circumscribes a supreme ideal, and obviously for the Hindu thinking and religiousness, or, in an apart variant, for Lao-Tzi's followers, in the case of the Christendom the things differ. One can immediately notice why the things are such and not otherwise. The Christendom, given its doctrine on a person-like and extra-mundane God, it made possible several religious ideals which did not hesitate to occur, in order to dispute their primacy, The mysticism, with its variants, it promotes the aspiration towards the union between man and God. The faith, with its variants, it pleads for a particular report between man and God, as being forever remaining separated. The faith understood like this it constitutes a steadfast and incorruptible report from a being to another being, without the possibility of a confluence or of an osmosis. In the religions where God is conceived as a distinct being, as an "animal vivens" and not as an impersonal principle, it is natural there to occur also the religiousness of "faith"-

type, one perfectly separated from the mystical tendencies. The faith is founded on a delimitation report: here is the man, beyond is God. By admitting an apart type of religiousness of the faith, we do not understand by any means to deny the presence and the force of the faith as the mystical type. But the faith at the mystics is not recommended as a coronation of the religious life. At mystic, the faith regardless how acute, it aspires towards something else, and the target proposed by them is the wonder-state, the annulation of the individual, and the absorption of the man into God, or into Absolute. At mystics the faith is a road, but the target remains the ecstasy. To the "believers'" type, the *faith* is, on the opposite, the expression of a given and definitive report between man and God, namely the concluded form of this report.

The mystical states presented by the initiated ones as a-cosmic states, as state escaping the historical conditions, are, according to all debated testimonies and proves, conditioned by stylistic categories. Theya re integrated, thus, *eo ipso*, among the normal phenomena and they fully participate to the historical relativity. All the more, the faith with its variants will participate, at its turn, to the same relativity. It is true that the religious man is tied, through his faith, to a spiritual content or doctrinal body, which he exalts and places above any historical relativity. Most often the faith consists of a tight correlation with a certain doctrine, admitted by the religious subject as being revealed on a divine way. Could be such a claim justified, as formulated by Parsism and Judaism and Islam and by so many other doctrines? Toe theologians this is not a problem. We are adding here also the fact that this is not a problem either to philosophers. The theologians on one hand, and the philosophers on the other hand, they peremptorily solved this matter, and in diametrically opposed senses.

In an older study of ours, we have occupied ourselves, comparatively, with the Christian faiths, under stylistic report, and we reached a series of ascertainments. In a few chapters from *The Mioritic Space* we operated with the necessary distinctions, not so much from dogmatic angle, but from stylistic angle, between the catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant religiousness. It might be necessary to read again those chapters, for they belong here as well, right now, in order to illustrate some of our considerations. Regardless which will be the claim of a certain faith of being founded on a extramundane inspiration, it remains as fact that the religiousness always puts on historical forms, and that it not manifested but framed by, articulates in, crossed through, penetrated by, and structured in stylistic categories. By those secret categories of the human

spirit, variable at their turn as well, which press their seal on all cultural creations. The comparison led us to results among the most obvious ones.

Thus, the Catholicism crystallized as religiousness:

1. in strongly conscious and lucid forms;
2. in frames reminding of spirit of statist organization;
3. by factors of authority and discipline;
4. placing in the center of the world the priest reckoned as an equivalent of the divinity.

The Orthodoxy, on the other hand, was favorable to a religiousness:

1. of more overshadowed, unostentatious genre;
2. in the perspective of the rule of the existence;
3. sympathetically welcoming everything that is organic;
4. placing in the center of the interest a transcendence that descends towards the world by own initiative, the world being an accommodating receptacle;

The religious life of the Protestant has its own characteristics as well. It is constituted:

1. on a ground of freedom of the individual conscience;
2. through dramatic problematization, through deliberation and decision;
3. asking for faithfulness after the decision had been made;
4. implying a special report between man and transcendence. The man is called to raise himself towards transcendence by the effort of his spirit. When the transcendence seems so far than the man cannot reach it, the man, by exhausting all his forces, in the despair of the non-reaching, he will hope everything from the divine grace.

THE EARTHQUAKE-FAITH

In the history of the religions, we often encounter some states of faith of bewildering intensity of the mystical states, without being and without having to be proper mystical states. We want to tarry for a little while on such a religious phenomenon. We are referring here to the so-called “earthquake” which Søren Kierkegaard’s soul crossed through – this torn flag of the Christian idea. This example is of special interest, from several standpoints. In the first place, this

case perfectly illustrates the sudden transformation of the soul and of the spirit, which we intend to speak about. By its kind and intensity, the process closely reminds of the mystical ecstasies, though it took place outside any mysticism, on a souly plan that cannot be except that of the faith. Secondly, this case strikingly proves to what extent the religious life of "faith"-type, founded on a so-called divine revelation, it is, at its turn, tightly connected to the stylistic coordinated of an individual, or an epoque, or of a nation: Søren Kierkegaard represents, through his religiousness, as no one else, a phenomenon that was possible only and only on the porch of the Protestantism of northern facture. Elsewhere the circumstance would have annulled the apparition. The innate temperamental inclinations, but also a certain kind of education, they prepared, without any doubt, the ground for what was to take place.

Søren Kierkegaard's biographers tell us that, while he was a teenager, he excelled in various talents. Especially the dialectics would have been his strength, as also the ruthless irony, gifts which determined his father to nickname him as "the fork". Rightly so, the *pricking* "fork" never failed being so. We know that, according to his father's wish, he decided to follow theological studies. "He decided" is only to say so, because he was still very undecided. Raised in a tragical, eschatological, somber religiousness, from his father's side, who suffered from real religious crisis, Søren, as student, he felt himself attracted towards all imaginable domains, but too little towards the theological Christendom of the Protestant faculties. He was rather passions with the intellectual kaleidoscope of his time, namely: the natural sciences, the dialectics, the romantic philosophy, the law, the literature, and the theatre. In order to formulate some original literary plans, he studies and he gathered diverse documentation on the psychology of the criminals, in the judges' archives; with the same casuistry passion of juridical bloodhound, he sniffed, in the same time, the psychology of the "great adventurers of the nonreligion". Don Juan, Faust, Ahasuerus. Apparently dominated by the most despaired preoccupations, and also by a very contradictory way of living, he was hiding, behind an ironical and frivolous mask, a permanent and great sufferance; the still unclear sufferance of not being able to find a truth of his own, namely that idea which he could live and die for. And the years were passing by, and the secret old age of his youth did not want to concede; he was searching for himself and he was unable to find himself; and there passed away a long time until he found that truth that engaged him personally, that absorbed his existence, or that truth that became "existence" to him. Awful familial and persona happenings made him despair and be complacent in despair, as himself

confessed. The Christendom? Could Christendom be a refuge to him, to his soul, his soul that had all harbors devastated? In his time, the Christian doctrine was the object of some useless misinterpretations; the Christian doctrine became totally inoffensive by the Hegelian philosophy. It is true that the great German thinker assimilated the terminology of the Christian dogmatics, but he twisted it and he gave it significations which no longer had anything in common with the grave biblical words. The Hegelian interpretation of the Christendom occasioned to Kierkegaard some revolt gestures. Despite Kierkegaard was enthused by the Hegelian dialectics, which himself used for making his own arena of, which he wielded with a proficiency that could have been envied by the master himself, despite all these he raised with exceptional lucidity and responsibility against disfigurations which the Christian doctrine fell sacrifice to. Instead of all these diluted misinterpretations he preferred a sincere and categorical attitude against Christendom.

One could say that, once that happened, the irreparable took place. But no. Kierkegaard did not break all the bridges. His religiousness, planted within him during his childhood, it was still palpitating somewhere in the hidings of his genius. Kierkegaard was lit up by the nostalgia for the faith, of that faith that has its kind of certitude, that particular mode of certitude which the letters of Saint Paul tarry close to, as also the religious preoccupations of Luther. His souly dilemma and torments related to the faith lasted until he was 23. Then, after the terrible secrets hoovering upon his family was haphazardly unveiled to him, the sin and the curse which his father must expiate, after awful days of darkness and dread, which he felt hopelessly destroyed in, then, on 19th of May 1838, at ten and a half in the morning, he felt himself suddenly changed "as he was brought from the brink of the death back into the light of the life". Often, the mystics or the converted record the data of the decisive spiritual moment with the outmost precision, as that event would have cosmic repercussions. On that memorable date, Kierkegaard wrote in his notebook: "there is an indescribable joy that set us in fire as inexplicable as unmotivated is the shouting out of Apostle Paul: 'rejoice yourself, and I say you again, rejoice!'". Kierkegaard had then, finally, the holy certitude that God can make saints out of sinners. What Kierkegaard called as "the great earthquake" and "the change" took place. Once again, though: we are not allowed to confound this event to what the mystics call "ecstasy" or "man's union with God". The great earthquake meant only achieving the faith after a profound souly crisis. Kierkegaard's life continued to be rowdy after that as well, full of internal indecisions, full of inexplicable caprices,

but he was searching, with his whole ardor, forever strengthening his faith, his personal truth, which he had once to live and to die, and that was his sole support in man's – in his opinion sinful – life. His hesitations and his crossing from an attitude to another, and his sentimental dialectics rhythmed in contrasts, made Kierkegaard's life one of the wordiest lives known to us. Usually, from an almost ill indecision he abruptly crosses to terrible decisions which seem impossible to understand. His souly lability was accompanied by an excessive inclination to problematize and dramatize any situation, especially those situations which are so familiar to other than they do not even notice them. His dialectics that was very fertile relatedly to his writings, it contained something sterile in itself, as a cavalcade in a courtyard trampling empty wheat ears. Ha inflicted to himself difficulties with postulates plucked out of *absolute*, through his burning ironies, through his masks we worn, through his art of existential actor, and through his challenges. From the perspective of his personal truth, namely of the Christian faith sheltered against any slimy questions, he was right, naturally. But due to the way he wanted to convey his faith in deeds, on the plan of his life, he seemed to bring, at each step, an offense to the organic, healthy, and normal daily life.

The Young Kierkegaard engaged one day to Regine Olsen, that girl that followed to play such a decisive role in his life and destiny. Certainly, he loved her above everything, but he, as in other circumstances as well, he barely got to be a little serene and then started to problematize his love, to analyze the sentiments of his fiancée, to test her, to look at their love from the standpoint of the absolute, to ask himself if they were matching of not, and to weigh in if the future marriage was founded on absolute sincerity. He wanted to confess to his fiancée his life's mirky secrets, maybe also a black word also on that thorn left in his flesh after the period of his erotic devilish period, but then he doubted that Regine could endure such confessions, and he kept his silence. And then he struck again the crystal to try its strength, and he again uttered whole and half words, destined to tear apart and to devour any serenity of his life. After that, despite their love was comparable to any other love, he started doubting the fact that he should marry of not.

He was tormenting Regine with his eternal problematizations, and he was throwing himself in the vicious circle of the unsolvable dilemmas. "If you marry, you will regret it; if you do not marry, you will regret that too". And this internal swirl, in the beginning piercing deeply, it started engaging the water of his souls in ever wider circles. His dilemmas were like those of a

sick man who does and undoes the ball of thread. Seemingly without any reason, except his hesitations, his suspicions, and his internal falling apart, his engagement was broken; and in order him to make his fiancée's pain more endurable, he became cynic, he played theater, he showed himself in a certain light in order to cause horror to that being who he loved above all, and whom he followed to dedicated his entire literary work to, after they broke apart, and who he chose to be his only inheritor after he died two decades later. Yes, this Søren was thinking until he died, at the girl he engaged out of love and whom he broke with only because it seemed to him that their love did not fulfill the *absolute* conditions required by his faith.

One cannot overlook this story because it prefigured, in a way, the catastrophic happenings from the end of Kierkegaard's life. Rightly so, something similar happened later on, when he attacked the official Christendom, in the so honorable person of Bishop Mynster, whom Kierkegard was tied to by so many memories from his childhood. In the name of the absolute Kierkegaard did not spare his love and fiancée; how could he spare the Church? But let's go back to the crisis related to Regine Olsen and show how that unchained within him his creator powers. His book appears in a torrential rhythm. Due to his incredibly dynamic style, due to the problems he had, due to the psychological analyses of vertical dimension totally unexpected at his time, due to the shown paradoxes, due to his irony, and due to his polemical impetuosity, he quickly focused his attention on the moment. And he was not a sole author: he suddenly was an entire bunch of authors. This was because, out of the multilateralism of his souly and spiritual inclinations, one would say that Kierkegaard was choosing, one at a time, aspect after aspect. He knew how to give these aspects if his, in his writings, successively, so much vigor and self-roundness, so that they started living autonomously, and they became as many "characters". And the author, by speaking on their behalf, he was changing his pseudonyms accordingly. Himself an entangled ball of thread, a thorn melancholic, a multilateral agitated, and an undecided who did not even simulated any unity, he imposed on each time his characters a unique-sense behavior and consistent and absolute standpoints. The hesitant, the despaired Kierkegaard wanted, of course, himself to have a similar position in *absolute*. But he was too complicated to immediately find that position. He still decomposed himself in characters hoping for *totally* finding and accomplishing himself. The necessary spiritual level for such a position of existential identification to his personal truth, it was achieved by Kierkegaard through his "great earthquake", by finding that authentic biblical belief, by the great shaking that determined him to

repeat Apostle Paul's words: "Rejoice yourself, and I am saying you again: rejoice yourself!". At the end of his life Kierkegaard found also the strength to live and die for his truth. But into what that truth? The truth of the "divine revelation".

The truth revealed through Christendom was, to Kierkegaard, the absolute. This was the sacred certitude gushed up within himself through the great earthquake. The live outside this truth will mean lie and sin. And which human life will not be, relatedly to the truth revealed by God, a simple and grave sinfulness? Even the human rationality, what will it be in comparison to the revealed truth except a shortcoming and a spring of lie? Not the rationality provided the criteria, but the divine revelation does that. The truths revealed by God are absolute paradoxes, absurdities, in front of which the prostitute rationality (as Luther called it) is helpless. Not the rationality is called to weigh in the truths of the divine revelation but, on the opposite, the rationality must be weighed in in the perspective of the revelation. Kierkegaard started seeing and interpreting the whole existence through religious categories and according to religious criteria: the world, the life is a sin, and one cannot exist the sin except by divine grace. One expects everything from the divine grace; despite all these, the man must struggle, to get despaired, in order him to reach the true faith that itself is a grace shown by God to the man. The man must take *all efforts* because only thus, by failing, he will reach the full conscience of the nothingness, of his sinfulness towards God. On behalf of the divine revelation and according to its radical norms, Kierkegaard stood against the official Church and he started his holy and merciless war, and he drew upon himself all the consequences for that. On behalf of some absolute postulates, he did not spare his fiancée yore; how could he spare the Church while hardened by the same postulates? We know that his life was changed by that in fire and tearing apart and that he actually dies like a martyr.

I said that Søren Kierkegaard, regardless his attitude against the official Protestant Church, he cannot be understood except on the line and in the climate of the Protestant Christendom. Out impression which we express plainly, it is that we could only with difficulty find a second personality that could be equally reckoned as a particular exponent of the Protestantism, as Kierkegaard was. The Protestant spirit, unlike the Eastern Christendom and the Roman Christendom, it is characterized by the inclination to extremely problematize the religious life, by the accent placed don the spirit's liberty, and on the conscience, on the internal deliberation, upon deciding and opting for an attitude and, nonetheless, also by the excessive

dynamization of the religious feelings. The Protestantism wants to disturb, to set the soul in movement; the Protestantism strengthen the urge to conquer the transcendence and to hope everything only from the divine grace, after the man convinced himself about the nothingness of his attempts and of his being. The Protestantism is Christina on the most lucid plan of the thinking, on the ground of a wide and violent problematization of the doctrine, of a deliberation and of the inner decision of the spirit. The spirit, in the frame of the Protestantism, free in essence, he poses himself as a problem to be accomplished through assertiveness.

We could not indicate another personality who has achieved more fully, more individually, both through his life and doctrine, this religious type of Protestant orientation, except Kierkegaard: this fire without a hearth. To violently problematize his doctrine in Protestant spirit, Kierkegaard was helped not only by the usual logics, as the reformers were, not only by the enormously sharp logics in the spirit of the criticism, as in case of Kant for instance, but together with those Kierkegaard was served by his "dialectics", namely that strange living logics adapted to all existence's contradictions. Kierkegaard introduced without shying the *dialectics* in the Protestant problematizations of the Christina doctrine and of the religious life, namely in the very heart of that problematization. The Protestantism with the wight it presses upon the freedom of the conscience, upon the thinking as such, upon the deliberation and decision, and upon the spirit who offers himself – does it not seem to you, this Protestantism, as intendedly tailored for people who have no organic roots rooted in this world, for people who are only "spirit", namely spirit who offers himself?

Kierkegaard's being was one of the most appropriate grounds for grafting a Protestant scion. An incontestable religious genius, Kierkegaard was – let's not forget that – also an incurable melancholic. The melancholy is the desperation of that being that no longer feels his organic rooting in the world. His native melancholy was the circumstance that destined Kierkegaard to express, as no one else, the Protestant spirit. The melancholic who has not root piercing the soil, awfully suffering because of his hesitation, because walking around in the circle of all dilemmas, he is truly called to cherish up to exaltation *the value of the decision*. It is a known fact that the melancholic feels sorry even for any unimportant things, he sees all his mistakes as through a magnifier glass, and he is too bon dot invent imaginary guilts on behalf of his own poor individual. Kierkegaard's father suffered religious crisis, desperation crisis, even in his childhood, so that on a moment of torment and misery he cursed God. Even somebody who is

not a specialist in soul's illnesses could diagnose here the presence of the melancholy. This sickly souly habit passed upon his son. The whole work of Søren is crossed through by the echoes of this illness "that does not kill you, but that does not let you live", of "despair". He really reckoned his despair as a road to absolute, and he recommended it to others as well: "Let yourself despair! Let yourself despair with the whole your heart and with the whole your strength!". So strange a case. The melancholy, at other a simple illness, Kierkegaard transformed it in a souly persona climate, one very favorable to his Protestant genius. Rightly so, his soul premises made possible at Kierkegaard a posing of the Christian problems in Protestant spirit, with a hallucinatory acuteness and lucidity, unlike to any man who has his roots deeply rooted into the soil and into the seps of the life. The melancholy that was to others a sickly state, it was to Kierkegaard some sort of organ of his religious geniality. It provided him with his clairvoyance on all those precipitous faces of the Christian problematics, like only the Protestant dares to understand those problems. From behind of Protestantism's preferred terminology speaking us about the human existence tarrying into sin, into nothingness, about the sentiment of total loss and of unworthiness of the man in front of God, a great melancholy shows itself.

As ensemble Kierkegaard remains an impressive exponent of a northern religiousness. A religiousness that mixes to such extent the inner agitation, the problematization, the decision, the thinking, the idea of spirit that offer himself, such religiousness has, at least, in comparison to the eastern Christian religiousness, something "made" and not "innate". The natural calm and the inner transfiguration of Aliosha, or of abbot Zosimus from *The Karamazov Brothers* – Dostoyevsky's novel -, the unsearched for quietude, they have nothing "made" in them. These ones seem to exist together with the nature and with the life's eternity. When looking at the kind and at the live of some Aliosha, you feel the need for saying: "*Anima naturaliter christiana*". The soul is Christian by his nature itself. The organic is here naturally integrated into the above-nature calmness. Or, by getting out of the Christian courtyard, the serene, sublime greatness of the Brahman saints or the natural greatness of Lao-Tzi, they do not have anything "made" as well; they are supposed as such, they are sublime as the flight, untouched by doubts or by haste, of the vulture. The tormented, the restless, and the uprooted of the world, Kierkegaard, he had, of course, his mightiness. He was imposing, but his religiousness was rather a spasm of his conscience that a flower of his conscience. After reading Kierkegaard's works, as after taking a look at his life, we cannot get rid of that impression that the man, despite his depth and

seriousness, he had been touched by the addiction to acting. Far from always being an "existentialist", he not rarely was a simple existence's actor. He loved too much his pseudonyms, his masks, he was interested too much in theater and he played to much theater, in order him not to be accused of being: an actor of the existence. It is true that, sometimes his mask was "organically one" with his cheek. A sinner was Kierkegaard, as himself reckoned, a sinner who was not completely transfigured by the grace either in the state of faith or through "the great earthquake". Anyway, as religiousness, Kierkegaard represented a maximum - maybe reached by others too, but never surpassed.

THE THRILL-RELIGIOUSNESS

By unfolding a few forms of the religious life, we tarried very attentively upon the collective ones, or upon some forms having obvious connections with the collective ones. But the religious life is not limited only to such apparitions. There is, especially in Europe, also a more personal religiousness that occurs in the personal report with the Christian doctrine, as for instance at Goethe, or a religiousness that is pronouncedly anti-Cristian and of a pagan impulse as at Nietzsche. Any attempt of philosophy of the religious life is constrained to take heed at such phenomena, more isolated ones - that is right -, but which did not remain inconsequential.

Goethe's religiousness had nothing dogmatic in its way, neither in Christian sense nor in any other sense. The multilateralism of his genius, who was no stranger to the religious thrill in any of his manifestations, determined us to speak about a religious polyvalence at Goethe. Goethe confesses once to Jacobi – a thinker of a personal religiousness – that: "As far as I am concerned, given the multiple orientations of my being, I am never satisfied with a sole way of thinking; as poet and artist I am a polytheist; I am a pantheist as researcher of the nature, and equally much so. And if I need a God too for my personality of ethical man, my nature has taken care of that as well". As thinker, Goethe is not abstract but intuitive. But Goethe's intuition has its totally apart procedures and we owe to separate it from the other sorts of intuition which the world's literature speaks about; Goethe's intuition differs from Spinoza's mystical intuition and it differs too from the vulgar intuition dome with the senses, it is different from Bergson's intuition as also from the intuition set in motion by phenomenologists. All the significations enumerated

and attributed to intuition are stranger from the Goethean meaning. Of course, Goethe was a sovereign of the senses; the nature, in all its sides, it delighted him up to exaltation. But his intuition never remained attached to the given nature, but it crossed beyond it; his intuition surpassed the palpable, the accidental, the concrete, but in the main time it avoided to adventure itself towards obscure nebulae of transcendent character. The Goethean intuition remained in the most profound vicinity of the phenomena, without evading in empty spaces. Let's add here also that Goethean intuition had the gift of being itself creator of forms. The starting point of the Goethean conception about nature, and, finally, about God – because up to a point the nature was God to Goethe, and God was him the nature – the departure point of the Goethean conception was the belief that the nature manifests itself in an explosive richness of configurations (*Gestalten*). The German word mentioned by us between parentheses has not adequate Romanian translation. "*Gestalt*" means, without any doubt: configuration, form, figure, but it has not such an abstract, rigid, and geometrizing signification as these words have in Romanian. *Gestalt* means rather plastic form or figure, somewhat moving, full of life. Goethe was thinking intuitively, in configurations, more precisely in "*Gestalten*". His ideas had a palpable body. Famous and illustrative is for his way of thinking his so-called theory about *Urpflanze*, about the original plant. By intensively occupying himself with the morphology, Goethe gathered an immense study material and plenty of observations related to the forms, the parts, the organs, and the life of the plants. To a certain point, Goethe reached the conclusion that all plant's parts, as the stem, the roots, the leaves, the flowers, the stamens, all of them are, in the salt instance, only modifications brought to a supposed fundamental form that, in his opinion, it would be the "sheet". The sheet is contracted, it is extended, it is thickened, it is dilated, and out of itself and through itself, through a simple metamorphose, it produces all plant's sparts. And this at any plant by and large. In other words, any plant would represent a musical variation on a sole theme: the sheet. Consequently, Goethe believed that the original plant must have been a simple "sheet". The case of the original plant is not singular in Goethe's naturalistic studies, for he intuited the existence of an original phenomenon behind all phenomena. Among other, Goethe studies the animal skeleton as well, and he thought that here the original phenomenon must have been the "vertebra". The skull's bones would be only modified vertebrae. Endless toils undertook Goethe for studying the colors and the phenomena of the light, and he discovered in this regard too, one so called - original phenomenon. All the colors would be born, in his opinion, out of the

admixture of two basic elements: the luminous and the darkened. An example: by looking at the albescent smoke on the dark background of a forest, the smoke seems to be blue. From here the Goethean rule: blue seems to be any albescent transparent environment looked at on a dark background. Speaking about colors, Goethe called them, not once, as "deeds of the light, deeds and sufferings": for he looked at the light as a power eternally fighting the darkness; the colors would represent the light's victory in its fight against darkness. Obviously, we are here in front of a thinking that hesitates between senses' data and myth. Any original phenomenon (and all natural phenomena presenting similarities have at their basis such an original phenomenon) is like a hallucination, and not something abstract or conceptual. Any attempt to understand on the way of the logical intelligence an original phenomenon, one that has something irrational in itself, it can cause within us, according to Goethe, as a state of insanity. From there comes that the original phenomena must be looked at them as such, so that any attempt of rationalization is forbidden to us. We must look at the original phenomena with wonder, with a sentiment of *religious veneration*. The place of these original phenomena is somehow the threshold of the divinity, of the divinity manifested within nature. The absconded region, but presenting possibility to be highlighted, of the original phenomena, it was the country of Goethe's spirit. The thinker and the poet frequented them while being penetrated, with a tremble, by their air. Tarrying around the original phenomena clarifies o good portion of the Goethean spirit's dimensions. Here, in the region of the original phenomena Goethe had his equilibrium center: from here, as from advanced promontories, he looked, with a thrill, in the divinity's unknown, but without venturing himself into that unknown; but, also from here, from the region of the original phenomena, he will descend loaded with a sacred thrill into the world of the senses. It was said that Goethe rather lived in the world of the senses. That is true, but in the world of the senses Goethe did not live on the surface of it, for he answered the impressions he received through the senses, with dense and of strong and high essence feelings, which were communicated to him by the original phenomena, and also by that shy gaze he had beyond those. Goethe's religiousness was, in the first place, "sacred thrill". The steadfast source of this sacred thrill remained the divinity's unknown. But Goethe preferred to gather his sacred thrill from the plateau of the original phenomena, from where he brough it down with him in the daily world.

There has often made a comparison between the original phenomena to the Platonic ideas (the world of the logos from many other doctrines) or even between the original phenomena and

the Aristotelian entelechies. They who really want to utter inappropriate conclusions are free to do that. In our opinion, the Goethean original phenomena though are something else than the Platonic idea or the Aristotelian entelechies. First of all, the Platonic ideas compose an apart world, of pure existences, while Goethe saw the original phenomena within world, namely through the transparency of the concrete things. Secondly, the Platonic ideas are static, absolute, definitive, some sort of total norms and models of the things from this world. Thus, any species of plants has its own idea, a perfect model in the heavenly world. The Aristotelian entelechy, rightly so, is dynamic and secretly present in the concrete beings and creatures, but the entelechy as well is total, one for each species of beings, exactly like the Platonic ideas. The original phenomenon, not of each species of plants but of *all* plants, it is, according to Goethe, the sheet, the sheet out of which, through metamorphose are produced the plant parts: the root, the stem, the leaves, the flowers, the stamens etc. At Plato each color has its idea in heavens. At Goethe the original phenomena, of all colors, is the admixture between luminous and dark. We are ascertaining, therefore, related to the Platonic ideas (and to Aristotelian entelechies) a relative symmetry, of "totality", between them and the natural forms. At Goethe there is not such symmetry; between the original phenomena and natural phenomena he admitted a more complex report, a more secret report, and rather an "asymmetry". All the plants, without any exception, are placed into a filiation report with the "sheet"; all the colors are placed in a derivation report with "the luminous-the darkened". Then, Goethe's original phenomena are not static as Plato's ideas are, they are in ceaseless transformation, in metamorphosis or internally split in polar, active, and productive factors, through reciprocity (the luminous-the darkened). By and large, the original phenomena as thought by Goethe, there are some deeper and more secret factors than the Platonic ideas are. The Platonic ideas do nothing else but representing on a plan of typical idealization the natural phenomena themselves. The Platonic ideas are ideal models of the being, of the creatures, of the things, but each being and thing are reckoned and taken in account in its conceptual totality. The concrete oak tree has its own idea, while to the oak tree as a whole it corresponds the idea-oak tree (at Aristotle the oak tree as a whole has an entelechy that corresponds to the total concept of the oak tree). In this regard too, Goethe had its alibi, for he proceeded like this: he isolated a part from a whole (the "sheet" from a plant) and he transforms this part in a productive factor of the whole. By ascertaining all these differences, we argue that

Goethe, regardless who his masters were, he was a very original thinker regarding his conception on the original phenomena.

Sadly, or whatever word you would use here, the Goethean metaphysics was not developed in a system, but it was rather aphoristic, rhapsodic. It is sure that most often Goethe himself did not realize his originality, an unwilling originality, but just because of that even more remarkable. But the commentators' duty if that of going farther than the authors did. There remains a task of the positive critique to highlights what is specific Goethean, even where Goethe himself was not always aware of what really belonged to him.

The nature was at Goethe, at least partially, identified to God. The original phenomena are as some sort of organs of God Who is understood as an active center within nature. It seems that in the Goethean conception God exceeds the nature. The fact is that Goethe looked at nature as at an animated and living organism. That power that exceeds the nature and it animates the nature is God. They talked much without anybody to seriously protest against it, about Goethe as disciple of philosopher Spinoza. Who dared to protest that once Goethe declared himself, out of naiveness, as student of the great pantheist, and that definitively consecrated the confusion between the organicist quasi-pantheism, plastic, picturesque, of Goethe, and the unequivocal pantheism, linear, geometrical, monumental, of Spinoza. The truth is that Goethe, in his youth, he was enthusiastic regarding Spinoza's metaphysics, but Goethe's reading became an occasion of authentic Goethean creation and exegesis. Such a personality as Goethe was, he interpreted everything according to his spirit, without realizing it. Today, when we know about as many forms of pantheism as many varieties of some species of exotic birds, it is easier to us to discern between the two metaphysics which entered so resoundingly in the European conscience, that of Goethe from that of the lens polisher from Amsterdam. The conception of the identity: *Deus sive natura*, God equal to nature, it is a Spinozian formula. Sometimes Goethe affirmed the same thing; still, it seems that at Goethe the nature was rather a manifestation of God Who breathes and palpitated within nature, and He even exceeds the nature. Beyond this affinity, the two conceptions differ and sometimes they even contradict on one another.

At Spinoza the nature was an impersonal God, mathematic, mechanical, geometrical, dominated by a determinist necessity. Out of such a definition given to the nature everything comes out logically, and composing a perfectly articulated system, one with smooth edged of polished diamond. Everything seemed to be rationalized or rationalizable. On the opposite, the

godlike nature that Goethe spoke about, it does not fit a logical system, because of not being rationalized but organic, full of life. And the life, even according to Goethe's opinion, it cannot be comprised in intelligence's categories. Only what is death is rationalizable. The rationality does not comprise the reality but it only builds inadequate mathematical symbols of the reality. But that did not mean that the nature would not have at Goethe its essences and articulation about the world and Spinoza's conception about the world, let's note that in Goethe's world of organicist facture intervene magical powers as well. Behold some *factors* which, in a principial manner, are impossible in the logical, mathematical, mechanical, and deterministic system of Spinoza. The magic is present in Goethe's world, among others, also under the form of a miraculous cosmic potentiality, here as a creator factor, and there as a destructive factor: the demonic. That demonic factor that Goethe spoke about in his *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, in his Orphic poetries, in his conversations with Eckermann, for a long time it was overlooked regarding the composition of the Goethean world. Behold a confession among the most illustrative: "I thought I would find in Nature… something that manifests itself only in contradictions and that is why it is non-comprisable in any notion, even less so in some word. This something is not divine, because it seems irrational, neither it is human because of not having intelligence, nor it is devilish for it is benefactor… It rather resembled to hazard because of not showing any consistency; it resembles to Providence for it allowed a connection of deeds to be intuited. Everything that limits us seem to that permeable; it seems to dispose arbitrarily of the elements which are necessary for our existence; it contracts the time and it extends the space. It seems to be complacent into impossible and it dismissingly banishes away the possible. This being entering among all others, by uniting them and by separating them, we called is 'demoniacal' following the example of the ancient…". If one read this by paying it the due attention, and to other similar places as well treating about demoniacal, it would be impossible the metaphysical ideas of Goethe and Spinoza to be confounded any longer. In the deterministic Nature, full of calculus and mechanical causality of Spinoze, there is no place for "demoniacal". Goethe's demoniacal comprises elements which, without any exception, they break the Spinozist schematism. The demonic is irrational, it though resembles the heavenly Providence, it lives on contradictions, it is arbitrary, and it is complacent in impossible. But in Spinoza's system there is no room for antinomy and for adventure, and his mind refused to conceive the hazard and the caprice. Goethe elevated the magic-demonic, on occasions, up to proportions of cosmic potence

or of counter-deity. When the demoniacal manifests itself in an individual with the whole its plenitude, such an individual will fight all people and even the nature's elements. This demoniacal cannot be destroyed except by the Universe, which the demoniacal tried his power on, and which the demoniacal enters in and waits there for another occasion of manifestation. So, there si pantheism and pantheism. Spinoza's God, identical to Himself, He never leaves the tracks ordered from eternity…, he cannot alter the sum of the angles from within a triangle. He does not know the charm of the adventure, of the happening, end especially him will not allow the presence, behind him, of the demoniacal. The original phenomena, the organicist countenance of the world, God trans-immanent, and especially the myth of the demoniacal are moments meant to definitively destroy the legend of the Spinozism attributed to Goethe.

The conception about a trans-immanent God (this concept belongs to us) allowed Goethe to assimilate, according to circumstances, to his religiousness, some Christian elements as well. In his poetry, in his dramas, he used such elements as well. In *Faust II*, the salvation idea was incorporated in an almost Catholic form. Buth such themes could rather have an incidental signification in Goethe's work. When he wanted to express his spiritual feelings, so various and complex, Goethe took the symbols from anywhere, and the shoes them only for their expressiveness without they to achieve in his spirit some dogmatic function. The Greek-Roman antiquity, the Middle-Age, the East, the Christendom, the Islam etc. served him as equally many symbols. We admit that sometime one could speak about a Goethean mystique but only in the widest sense of this word. The Goethean mystique not quite has continuity and wide breathing; it is rather a "thrill-mystique". Goethe's religiousness was polyvalent. Always alive, of an amazing souly plasticity, without though losing his substantial consistency, Goethe indulged himself even to a religious nomadism while still remaining identical to himself: he was polytheist in his poetry, he was a quasi-pantheist as researcher of the nature, then he was a monotheist as ethical personality, often Christian, as the fountains of his life were changing, a life that was generously spending itself but that had to be refueled. In all and through all Goethe represented through his religiousness as well, the spirit of the specific German classicism, of that classicism that is no stranger to a certain Romantic nuance.

THE DEFINITION OF THE RELIGION

Since Epicure and Lucretius, who tried to explain naturalistically the sacred shyness of the gods, up to Cicero and Lactantius, who were the first to occupy themselves with the philosophical origin of the word "religion", since antiquity up to these days, the religion was a research object under the most diverse reports. In order to totally comprehend the religion, there have been proposed a series of definitions. We do not intend to occupy ourselves with them more than necessary. They who want to know those in details can find them elsewhere, in other studies, erudite, or even in some philosophical dictionary. In the present researches we are going to be guided by some ideas and point of view which led us also in other philosophy studies on spirit and culture. This is the reason why letting aside the mentioned definitions will not deprive us of any fruitful suggestion, as well as a more assiduous contact with them would not confuse us. Schleiermacher, in his first thinking phase, of pantheistic-romantic orientation, he deified the religion as intuition and sentiment of the Universe, as sentiment of the infinite, as feeling of the eternity's dimension upon the finite and temporal things. Later on, after the philosopher was penetrated mode deeply by some Christian contents, he circumscribed the religion as sentiment of the "unconditional dependence" of the man in report with the absolute, with God, with the world. But God and the world were synonymous at Schleiermacher, the concepts had a confluence of pantheistic sense. Schleiermacher strived to provide the religion, as much as possible with an autonomy, by looking at it as independent from metaphysics, from art, and from ethics. The root, the domain, the subjective hearth of the religion would be the sentiment and not the knowledge as in case of metaphysics, neither would be the will as in case of ethics, nor would be the imagination as in case of art. Regarding this sentimentalization of the religion, but also the relating of the religion to absolute, we immediately notice the inclinations of the philosopher and of the religious man of a particular Romantic orientation, German-Romantic. Obviously, the philosopher formulated with enough precision a certain religiousness, but only the Romantic religiousness of pantheistic inclinations. If we apply the recommended definition to all religiousness forms which we described in the previous chapters, we will see how little this definition matches other religiousness forms immediately when we leave the circumstances of the Romantic religiousness. Is the religion a sentiment of the infinite? Let's refresh our assertions related to the Rigvedic, Brahman, Buddhist, Persian, Greek, and Chinese religiousness, and we

are going to immediately see not only how inappropriate Schleiermacher's definition is, and how little truth this definition will hold. As far it is concerned the Hindu religiousness from the Brahman period, we have ascertained that the religion is not a sentiment of the helpless creature towards an overwhelming divinity, but it is rather a sentiment that doe not lack a certain pride, a sentiment conditioned by the conscience of a quite balanced forces report supposed to exist between man and divinity. In the *Upanishads* the religiousness was configured around a possible report between two degrees of existence, which the human being is sometimes capable of. The man has the conviction about a possible advancing from the living as separate individual to a living in the virtue of which the individual self is felt identical to the universal self of the divinity. In Buddhism the religious phenomenon is constituted on the ground of a report between negative terms: the man's illusory existence as "self" in the senses' world, and the "metaphysical void" that takes the place for the divine whole. Let's remind that at Hindu we often encountered, as a component of the religiousness also the sentiment of the withdrawal from infinite. At the Chinese Lao-Tzi, the religiousness was mainly the souly state of finding himself maternally sheltered in the world's riverbed. In the structure of this religiousness does not enter the infinite's horizon, but rather the indefinite horizon of "circles" and of nests of Tao. At Persians the religiousness if the conscience that the man must be a political ally - to put it so - of God Who is the promoter of the cosmic health. And at the ancient Greeks the religiousness was related to the limited intramundane space, where the people feel themselves cohabitants with the gods, in some sort of hierarchical familiarness with them. But we are not going to mention the other religiousness forms too, previously described by us, and which sufficiently prove how little they say or how erroneous are Schleiermacher's definitions which actually correspond only to the German Romantic religiousness, of sentimental-pantheistic orientation, slightly guided towards Christendom. The more adequate – to some extent – definition of the Christian religiousness, that definition that tells us about the sentiment of the unconditional dependence of the man in report with the absolute, with God, and with the world, it still seems to us as very symmetrically composed related to what the religiousness may be by and large. Still, these are the most accepted definitions in the philosophy of the religion. Max Scheller, when analyzing the religious life with the more subtle tools of the phenomenology, he spoke on religion as a sentiment of unconditional dependence: "*Vermoge der natürlichen religiosen Akte schaut, dankt und fühlt der Mensch prinzipiell and allem und durch alles, was ihm sonst als dasweien und soseiend*

gengeben ist, sich ihm ein Seiendes erschilessen… das mindestens zwi Wesensbestimmungen besistzt: es ist absolut seined und es ist Heilig" (Vom Ewingen in Menschen). Likewise, Paul Thielicke, a philosopher of the domain with a well-established reputation, he defined: "the religion is the orientation towards unconditional" (*Religionsphilosophie*). All these circumscribing and delimitations, as many other too, which we came across with during our readings, they say - if we take heed at the generality which they aspire at – both too much and too little, in the same time. It will suffice if we compare the mentioned definitions to the few descriptions presented by us before, regarding the diverse religious modes, in the previous chapters.

Some premises. In order us to answer Max Scheller's definition, we are affirming that through a poetical act the man can see, can think at, and he can feel behind the things, and existence which he claims about as being absolute and sacred. From here comes that max Scheller's definition is at least unsatisfactory and anemic. In order to answer Paul Thielicke's definition on religion we affirm that the metaphysics as well is an orientation towards unconditional. Then, what would be the difference between religion and *metaphysics*? Regarding man's sentiment of dependence that is so much highlighted as subjective structure of the religion, we think that the upholders of this thesis are the victims of some Christian standpoint. But let's mention here that there were mystics whom the sentiment of dependence volatilized at, and who rather had an inverse sentiment: the sentiment that without their conscience God will not last even for a moment. And then, if in religion was necessarily about an orientation towards an absolute existence, how would be about the "metaphysical void", with the nonexistence, as postulate of the Lao-Tzi-ism and of the Buddhism? And then how comes that in many religions the gods are not looked at as absolute existences, but at most as superlative existence, or even as comparative existences, to the man and to other creatures (the vulgar Buddhism, the Jainism etc.)? On the other hand, a relating to an absolute and sacred existence we meet also in the man's purely magic thinking and behavior. We would want to know the religion, anyway, as more precisely separated from the simple magic. We have been uttering only a few of our reserves from so many which could be formulated relatedly to the religion's definition in use.

After more attentively examining the religious phenomenon in so divers variants, as they seem to result consequently to our study, we propose the following definition of the religion: *the religion circumscribes, in any of its variants, the self-totalization or the self-surpassing capacity*

of the human being in ideal correlation with the whole existence, but especially in ideal correlation to the ultimate elements or coordinates of the existential mystery by an large, which the man reveals to himself or which he reckons as revealed through creations of stylistic nature.

The moment which the proposed definition stresses upon, are several: it is about a "self-totalization", or about a "self-surpassing" of the human being, and it is, on the other hand, about the ultimate elements or coordinates of the existence's mystery by and large. We exposed in a some of our works the idea that the man is ontologically different from all the other beings. We defined the man as existence in the horizon of the mystery, having the purpose of attempting to reveal this mystery. The revealing attempts always take place within the categorial frames of a style, and that means that all these attempts are always hindered and made inadequate in report with the mystery. But the stylistic structures essentially depend on any revelatory attempt committed by the man into the mystery's immune substance. The human existence has several aspects which we must pay attention to: In the first place, it is the man's fundamental mode of existence, in the mystery's horizon. This ontological mode conditions the human being himself, and then, as a corollary of this mode, there is the man's tendency to reveal to himself, the mystery, under the form of some spiritual contrivances. Thos these aspects there is added a third one, for in all revelatory acts structurally intervene a series of deep categorial function (unconscious) of stylistic nature. Due to these categorial functions any spiritual contrivance appears to be consistently structured in itself. But doe to the same categorial functions of stylistic nature, the man's revelatory capacity is actually bridled, being hindered through them, always and in any circumstances, a positive and adequate conversion of the existential mystery. We must take heed at all these aspects when taking in account the religious phenomenon in all its variants. Any religion, because of being crystalized as a spiritual contrivance, it will be submitted to the stylistic determinations, effectively valid for any spiritual contrivance. This is not only an affirmation of deductive order, for we showed based on documents and analyses, how any religious apparition experienced, to the bone, the profound influence of a whole bunch of stylistic categories.

Here is the place us to show what the religions differs by, from other man's revelatory attempts, namely from metaphysics, from art, and from science. In order us to take this differentiation to its end, let's turn back to the definition of the religion so that to accompany it with our commentaries. In art, for instance, that is accomplished on an intuition plan and that is

answers some partial spiritual interests of the human being, – in art – the revelatory attempts do not necessarily aim to the ultimate elements or to the coordinates themselves of the existence's mysteries, but they aim to any mystery or to any aspect of the mystery. In science, that is accomplished on the plan of the schematic and conceptual constructions, and that it corresponds at its torn only to some partial interests of the human being, - in science – as well, the attempts aim to any mystery or to any mystery's aspect. But between metaphysic and religion we ascertain some similitude of interests and sometime even of means; this is for the metaphysics tends, as the religion tends as well, to reveal the ultimate elements, the coordinates themselves, of the existence's mysteries. Regarding the separation of the religion from metaphysics, it will be useful to us especially another moment of the definition we give to religion. Without any doubt, the religion always comprises also revelatory contrivances regarding the ultimate elements, regarding the coordinates themselves of the existence's mystery, but the religion is much more than that. The religion circumscribes the "self-totalization" of the "self-excessing" capacity of the human being in ideal correlation with the last elements or with the decisive coordinates of the existence's mystery by and large. The self-totalization or the self-surpassing capacity of the human being! What is this? Through the terms of "self-totalization" and of "self-surpassing" we understand the lower limit and the upper limit of the religiousness, namely a minimum and a maximum which can give, either one or another, either together in intermediary degrees, a religious state. Let's consider firstly the religiousness obtained through the human being's self-totalization process. The human being feels an inclination or a necessity for participating, in a way or another, with ell his faculties and aptitudes, to the order given by the revelation of the ultimate elements of coordinates of the existence's mystery. The results which the mentioned process leads to, they always stay of the religion's line. The metaphysics participates preponderantly or exclusively on the way of the "knowledge" to the order revealed by man to himself. Through religion, the human being self-totalizes in front of the order he reveals to himself, namely the human being participates to the mentioned order with the knowledge, with the affects, with the will, with the anticipation, with the intuition, with the imagination, and with the whole conscious fund of the desires and of the hopes, of his eros, and more than that, with the whole way of thinking rationally and irrationally, and even more than that, with the whole his way of magically thinking and feeling. We have determined the superior limit of the religiousness as a result or a self-surpassing process of the human being. In this process takes

place a concentration of the souly and spiritual powers, as also of the obscure power from the deeps, in order of a crossing beyond himself of the human being, in order to create a human existence of another order than the natural one. This religiousness is accomplished in a more obvious manner on mystical plan. But the most forms of religiousness represent something intermediary, between that religiousness achieved through the self-totalization of the human being and that achieved through self-surpassing.

We specify in our definition that in the religious processes the self-surpassing of the human being is done in "ideal correlation" with the ultimate elements or coordinated of the existence's mystery. What does it mean this expression: in "ideal correlation"? In order to avoid any equivocal, we argue that the self-totalization or the self-surpassing process of the human being, that takes place in religion, and the way which the man reveals to himself in, the mystery's ultimate elements or coordinates – they reciprocally determine one another, namely on ideal plan, namely like an idea is able to determine the human being and like the human being with its structures is able to determine the content and the form of an idea. This ideal correlation of effective reciprocity between the self-totalization of the human being and the way which we reveal to ourselves in, the structure itself of the existence's mystery, it is of special importance for understanding and delimitating the religious phenomenon. For instance, the metaphysics too aspires to reveal the structure itself of the existence's mystery, but the metaphysics proceeds more freely in its reports with the human being in his totality, and the metaphysics rather follows the guidance and the criteria of the "knowledge" as such. *In the metaphysical creation does not intervene, unconditionally, the self-totalization or the self-exceeding of the human being. But in any religion is necessarily established an ideal correlation between the self-totalization or self-surpassing process of the human being and the way which the revealing of the existence's coordinates is done in*. Due to this correlation is the facts that all the mystical or metaphysical contrivances included in any religion answer more or less some desires, manifested or subconscious, of the human being. Even the Buddhist who self-devours in searching for the metaphysical void, he expects from his entering into Nirvana a state of untold happiness. In any religion the man builds to himself a myth or a metaphysics in his image and likeness, but at its turn, this myth or metaphysics comprised in any religion tends to shape the man in its image and likeness. In such a correlation report play a role, doubtlessly, the aspirations as well which raise from the most hidden depths of the human being. In religion the men exists in the mystery's

horizon, but here he aspires to reveal to himself the existence's coordinates not so much according to pure criteria of knowledge, but in accord with the whole his being and therefore in accord also with the deepest and the most diverse subconscious aspirations of his; but, on the other hand, the man tends to self-totalize and to self-exceed in perfect reciprocity with the ideas and with the images he builds to himself, regarding the structure of the existence.

Let's then take heed also at some consequences of the "correlation". Any religion being built in the mentioned sense, it will find itself in correspondence with oldest and therefore with the most-permanent aspirations of the human being. From here comes the presence, in any religion, of so many metaphysical and mythological "archaic" themes. It is a sure thing that we could imagine a metaphysics completely purged of archaic themes, but that would be undrinkable as the distilled water is; but we really cannot imagine any religion truly disrobed of any archaic traits. Generally, any new metaphysics is always as less able to become the nucleus of a religion as it contains fewer archaic themes. The facture and the archaic nuances of any older religion, as also the unavoidable archaizing tendencies of any new religion, they are among the most natural consequences of the religion's being itself. The "correlation's" process, by engaging the permanent impulses of the human being, it attracts after itself the archaic or archaizing dosage or any religion. That does not mean that in the religious domain the renewal or the reform would be impossible. No. But any religious renewal, any reform, any new foundation, it will resort, in a way or another, to archaic – or of archaic facture - themes as well. On the other hand, we ascertain that the religion's archaicity we must reckon it as an epithet that is not at all synonymous to obsoleteness. It is true that there are many thinkers who reckon the religion as a remnant from mankind's obsolete phases. We admit that there always are more or less religious people, and even unreligious people. Still, the religion remains one of the eternal manifestations of the human being, for it circumscribes, as we have defined and commented, the tendency itself to self-totalization and to self-surpassing of the human being in ideal correlation with supposed ultimate coordinates of the existence, in whose horizon the man always is and he will always be ontologically situated. I have said that the religious life allows renewals without losing, by that, its archaicity karats. It is right that the religious life superimposes itself, in its contrivances, on those stylistic, abyssal categories which determine any contrivances of revelatory nature of the human spirit. The stylistic categories essentially structuring the religious contrivances, are continuously changing, differing from a geographical region to another, from a people to another,

from an epoque to another, sometimes even from an individual to another, some of them lasting for longer and being spread wider, while others last shorter and record a narrower spread. Without any doubt, the influence of the stylistic categories, so variable, upon the way which the religious life in structured in, it makes very difficult or even impossible an ampler and more articulated typology of the religions. Any religion is unique in its way. Still, the religion's archaicity as such is not too much influenced by these variations, for it rather depends on the themes, on the substance, on the content of the religion, than on its style.

To the archaicity of any religion collaborates, in the first place, the mythical themes, the magical thinking and feeling, the symbols, the ritual acts, which give together the phenomenon's complexity. The religion will not lack a certain archaic aroma even if the religion if kept within the strictest frames of the rationality. Kant, who transformed the moral law and the world of the noumenal freedom in religious object, he felt himself while standing on the threshold of his object, as thrilled by the sacred sentiment, as a primitive man in front of his venerated and taboo to touch idol. Regardless how new was the religion maintained by Kant within severe rational limits, it still preserved something form the archaicity of any religion, a nuance which the religion ceases without to actually be a religion; such a religion would be a simple metaphysics or philosophy.

The diverse archaic aspects of the religion due to its mystical and magical dosage led some psychoanalysts towards equaling the religion to neuroses. According to Freud, the religion is "*die allgemeine menschiche Zwangsneurose" (Die Zukunft einer Illusion*, 1927). Likewise, the myths were yore equaled to "dreams", or, sometimes, to the imaginary contrivances of the psychopaths. The older psychoanalysis presents the religion as an illusion stirred up by Oedipus complex. The psychoanalysts who are less influenced by Freud persevered in interpreting the religious contrivances in analogy to the dreams, as resolution of some psychic tensions, having sometimes a cathartic effect. The psychoanalysis's contribution to examining the religious phenomena is by no means neglectable, but everything must be reduced to right proportions. Likening the religion to psycho-neurotic symptoms, or likening the myths to dreams, are not lacking some humor and, if we preserve our lucidity, they might even be useful to some extent. What such investigations are imperiously required is they to proceed, in the same time with the comparison, with all seriousness, to a *separation of essence*. Behold some religiousness's particularities effectively hindering any attempt to equal the religiousness to the psychic

phenomena invoked by psychoanalysts. The religion occurs: 1. In connection with the man's existence in the mystery's horizon, as specifically human horizon; 2. Out of man's tendency to reveal to himself not only the mystery, but the mystery's fundamental coordinates themselves; 3. Out of the tendency of self-totalization or of self-surpassing of the human being related to the mystery's fundamental coordinates; 4. Everything having in religion countenance of spiritual contrivance and even the mode which the human being organizes himself in, inwardly and outwardly, in the process of self-totalization or self-surpassing, are influenced by the stylistic categories of the human spirit. No one, absolutely no one of these four aspects essential to any religion, does not belong either to the psychoneurotic phenomena or to the dreams. The psychoanalysis tends to present the religion as a peripheral phenomenon of the psychic life, or as a result of an impasse which the psychic life reached in, alike the dream. Right the elements composing the religion's archaicity would be, according to psychoanalysts, some symptoms situating the religion among abnormal phenomena. We do not deny that some comparisons can be made between religion and the phenomena mentioned by psychoanalysts, but we are stressing here that right in these analogies we see something peripheral, because, in essence, we deduce the religion out of tendencies belonging to the human being's definition itself, while the phenomena brought as proofs by the psychoanalysts are rather accidents of the biopsychic individual. We especially highlight that the tendency towards self-totalization or self-surpassing of the human being in ideal correlation to the mystery's ultimate coordinates, it seems to us a being a trait of supreme normalcy of the human genius. In this perspective, the archaicity, of course variable, but characteristic to any religion, it becomes a symptom pleading in favor of normalcy and of the permanence of the religious phenomenon.

Debating other sides of the religious phenomenon, we will benefit of the advantages of the definition proposed by us. In art, in science, in myths, in metaphysics, in all of them equally, we identify the same tendency of the human spirit to reveal to himself the mysteries of the existence, namely always within the frames of the stylistic categories. The victory takes place, each time, on a sole plan of the spirit. The art searches for its victory on the plan of the concrete intuition, the science on the plan of the schematical construction, the myth on the plan of the animated representation, and the metaphysics on the plan of the abstract vision. One can ascertain in culture even a particular tendency to accomplish all of these on some unique plan, as unaltered as possible by the other plans. The religion that circumscribes tendencies of self-

totalization and of self-surpassing of the human being, it aspires to victory, on the opposite, *on a multiplicity of spirit's plans*, namely on all the enumerated plans, but on other plans too. The religiousness appears therefore to be a spiritual phenomenon of maximum volume and complexity.

The religion's place in the frame of the culture appears to be determined by its volume and complexity as spiritual phenomenon. Actually, this place is variable. In époques, or in the individual spiritual oikonomia, which the human being's need for self-totalization and for self-surpassing is very acute to, the religion is destined to occupy a central place within culture, and so it is able to capture all other manifestations. On the contrary, during periods of excessive spiritual differentiation, when the tendency towards self-totalization or self-surpassing of the human being fades out, the unique-plan manifestations, as the art, the science, the metaphysics, the ethics, they become detached from the religious complex, so that they will be accomplished more autonomously, and the religion will be pushed aside.

Through all growths and diminutions, through all flourishings and vicissitudes, there remains a fact: the religion, regardless its complexity, it will always be under the determination of the stylistic categories of the human genius, by obeying them with the same docility as any other cultural manifestation. We have seen how deeply structured are, by the stylistic categories, even the modes of the mystical religiousness, which their bearers claim about as evading the human conditions. Out of these it results that the religion, due to its complexity, it is called to play in culture sometimes a more central while some other times a less central role, but the religion will never be itself creator of "style", is we grant this word its radical acceptation. We admit that a certain religion, especially one organized in institutions of churchly nature, it has the possibility of imposing an *institutional* style, which generations of people will conform themselves to, under the threat of being sanctioned. But the so-called institutional style is something previously created. Even more, since the moment of being imposed as style, it has stopped breathing a creator sense, and it will continue to be fulfilled only from the standpoint of the technical virtuosity. Let's give an example: the Byzantine style was not "created" by imposition on institutional way, by a religion having a readymade dogmatics. The religiousness and the dogmatics of the Easter Christendom were created in parallel to the Byzantine art, under the irresistible commandment of soke stylistic inclinations characteristic to the Eastern Christendom, from certain space and time. And these stylistic inclinations, these shaping

functions, they always compose together an unconscious "stylistic matrix" obeyed, equally so, by all the creator manifestations of the spirit. After the byzantine style proclaimed itself as "institutional style", namely conscious, lucid, it ceased to be really creator, and it cannot increase but regarding the virtuousness. In other words, sometime the religion can occupy a central place in culture due to its complexity, and this is obvious, but the religion *cannot substitute* the creator of style "unconscious matrix", for itself the religion is submitted to a matrix and it obeys that matrix's templates.

Being the situation clarified thus, it will stop countless disputes regarding the report between religion and culture. There circulate some opinions which would want to make us believe that between religion and culture there was an opposition report. This assumption is expressed, usually, in two ways, by being presented either as correlative opposition or as opposition through exclusion.

1. Some authors claim that the religion would be itself the "substance" creator of *forms* of the culture (Paul Thielicke). Between religion and culture there would be a report as between "substance" and "accident".

2. Other authors see in religion something totally opposed to culture. The religion would be something "revealed" to the man from God; the religion would be eternal and above any contingencies, while the culture would simply be only a human creation touched by caducity and nothingness.

To the thesis from the number 1 we answer: the religion cannot be the substance creator of forms, of the culture, because of itself, even in the mystique's modes which appear to be so substantial, it is totally submitted to the stylistic determinants which are at the basis of all cultural manifestations.

To the thesis from number 2 we answer: the claimed divine revelations, under the sign of which are placed by themselves so many religions, they take place, as we have been able to convince ourselves, within the same stylistic frames, and they are eminently structured by those stylistic frames, as the culture is as well. Their caducity and nothingness would depend, consequently, on the existence of the claimed divine revelations[2].

[2] Regarding the divine revelation, which so many of the past and present religions refer to, as there is the Parsism, the Judaism, the Islam, the Manicheism etc. it would be inappropriate us to enter here a discussion tackling with this matter's fund. Actually, this remains to be a problem of metaphysical nature, and from metaphysical angle any

The philosophers of metaphysical orientation occupied themselves often, at their turn, with the being of the religion. They contribution to the problems which we are here occupying ourselves with, it could be comprehended only within the frame of their metaphysics. WE are thinking at philosophers as Hegel or Eduard von Hartmann, who are illustrative for this "metaphysical" way of interpreting the religion. The religion (and with this the history of the religions as well) it appeared to these authors as a conscience of the divinity about himself, in becoming process within man and through man. The religion represents, according to the mentioned authors, only an incipient phase of the process, which the divinity reached the conscience about himself through, within man and through man. The philosophy would be, according to these authors, the culmination of this universal process, which the divinity is in. In other words, the religion would be an obsolete phase, its place being fatally taken by philosophy. As far as we are concerned, we do not incline at all towards such a depreciation of the religion. In the perspective of our conception, the religion as any other culture manifestations, it of course has its relativity, because of structurally bearing, as all of the manifestation of human culture, the stigmas of the irremediable isolation of the man relatedly to the existence's mysteries. But, in the same time the religion is, as all the other culture phenomena, the expression of man's supreme dignity springing out of man's endeavor to reveal to himself the existence's mysteries. More than that, the religion has as its basis the man's tendency to self-totalization or to self-surpassing. So, by no means one can reckon the religion as a man's obsolete phase, for the religion results out of permanent exigencies belonging to the man's very being.

The religion's definition annotated and commented in our previous considerations, it has and it wants to have, to some extent, an algebraic countenance. Algebraic – for in formulating it intervene a series of terms expressing abstract values, which could be each time replaced for other values. For instance, when we speak about the existence's coordinates or about the human beings' self-totalization, these coordinates are, if we confront them to the history of the religions,

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reader can deduce out attitude out of the conception developed by us on another occasion, regarding the transcendental censorship and regarding the transcendental brakes. Since according to our conception, the whole care of the Great Anonymous is right that of impeding the human being (through the transcendent censorship and through the brakes of the transcendence, from interpreting in appropriate and positive terms the existence's mysteries, we cannot see what role could have a revelation whose initiative should belong to the Great Anonymous. We cannot imagine that the Greta Anonymous takes with one hand in order to give with the other hand.

almost in each religion, others and others, as also the self-totalization process of the human being changes its countenance depending on religion. In Brahmanism, for instance, the benchmark coordinates are: impersonal God and the concrete world understood as illusion. In Buddhism the ultimate elements are the "nothing", the "metaphysical void", and the sensitive world understood as an illusion laid over this void. In Parsism the coordinated the coordinated again adopt a different signification: we find ourselves here in a realistic frame, the man being placed in front of the two principles-persons: Ormazd and Ahriman, and so on. Also, the self-totalization or the self-surpassing of the human being appears like a process of a particular countenance in each religion. This process, for instance in Brahmanism and in Buddhist appears to be guided by knowledge – in Christendom by the sentiment of love -, in Islam by will and by the sentiment of obedience, and so on. Anyway, the religiousness, by circumscribing the human beings' capacity of self-totalization and of self-surpassing, in correlation with the known terms, it does not always place the accent on the sentimental-affective life, as too often and erroneously the psychology of the religion imagines. The mentioned accent is actually very variable and it moves from upon a side of the human being upon another. In all these cases the religion remains the attempt to self-totalization and to self-surpassing, even in the mystical forms and in ecstasy states, when the man has the impression of self-nothingness. In ecstasy the man feels himself destroyed like individual, like individuation, but he has the sentiment of achieving the whole of the divine existence, or the paradoxical whole of the Nothing.

THE SACRED

One of the most constant elements of the religiousness is the sentiment of the "sacred". This element is surer and it is one of those effectively collaborating to the impression of archaicity of any religion. A series of researchers dedicated themselves to the problem of the importance of the sacred relatedly to the structure of the religious life. But Rudolf Otto was that who ins a truly epochal study (called *the Sacred*, 1917) developed the idea, and so he transformed it in a fundamentally religious category, and even in a nucleus of any religiousness.

Rudol Otto restituted, later on, the original sense to the word "sacred". In unspeakable seducing analyzes he restored the irrational the primary signification of the word "sacred", in

diverse languages, when its meaning was not yet altered by infiltrations of moral and rational nature. The sacred is placed again and contained in the riverbed of the beginnings. Ott called the sacred also as the "numinous" (from *noumena*). The numinous designates a special category of interpretation and of appreciation of the object, but also a particular souly state, felt by the man each time he believes that he is in front of a numinous object. In the presence of the numinous or sacred object the man experiences the feeling of a thrill and of the depreciation of his own being. The sentiment of the sacred thrill would have, according to Otto, the gift of placing us in an effective connection with a numinous reality. Therefore, the sacred would be a *sui generis* category, both of the religious *object* and of the human subject noticing that object. According to Rudolf Otto the religious emotion is reduced, in essence, to the sacred tremble, and it would be something totally different, for instance, from the faith into salvation, or different from the trust and the love granted to a superior being, all of these sentiments being only components accessory to religiousness. The sentiment of the sacred, or of the numinous, it can be experienced by the most people, maybe lesser by some of them, or maybe more by others. Rudol Otto proceeded then to an ample description of the "sacred" object in direct connection with the souly states produced by the sacred object within man. To the human soul the sacred object is "*tremendum*", namely dreadful, terrifying, extraordinary, and strange. The terror produced by the sacred object upon the man is a specific sentiment having its degrees and nuances, and it is irreducible to other sentiments. The scared terror is felt especially in the demoniac forms of the religiousness, but n either the more elevated beliefs - in gods – lack the sentiment of the sinister, of the spectral. In the superior religions the sentiment of the sacred terror was only ennobled, but it has not disappeared. Then, the sacred object is majestic, meaning that in its presence the man feels himself a whole nothingness, reduced, diminished, and almost abolished. Then, the numinous is attributed with an own energy, a totally particular one. Sometimes this energy is of a unique impetuousness: for instance, the mystics speak about the devouring ardor of God. They feel themselves rightly consumed, devoured, and burnt by God's love. Also, the sacred is accompanied by the sentiment of wondering, for it is admirable, fascinating, and majestic. This very complex sentiment of the sacred, described like this, would really place us, according to Otto, in contact with a sacred reality. The analytical exam undertook by Otto revealed the sacred as an apart category of preponderantly irrational nature, as a category that, through the mediation of the sentiment, it would place us in front of a sacred reality. *Anyway, the category of sacred* - as

Otto highlighted – *is the nucleus itself or the essence of the religiousness*. By and large, In Rudolf Ottos' philosophy the human spirit's categories, rational and irrational, they have a full objectivity, though they are aprioristic. By saying that, Otto wanted to provide the religiousness as well, "objectivity", or with an indisputable legitimacy. We are not going to enter a too detailed critique here, upon this theory concerning the religious life's substrates and legitimacy. We are going to bring only a few ensemble arguments expressing out stance on Otto Rudolf's philosophy.

How ended Otto to formulate this wonderful philosophy of the religion? We do not have more precise data, except the exposition itself as comprised in the mentioned study. Otto did not mention the procedure, but we think it had to be the following: Otto asked on himself: that the "*essence*" of the religiousness is, namely the *being of the religion*? And be probably started to looking for the less variable elements constantly coming back with maximum certitude, in all religious forms and aspects. To Otto, who started going on this way, it was not so difficult to find out that such constancy cannot be found among the elements of mythological and metaphysical contrivances, neither among the rational and ethical elements of the religions. Rightly so, all elements of this nature are variable, because, as we know very well, not even the element of the "divine" appears an indisputable constant of all the religions, and even lesser a "constant" are the *images* the people compose about divinity. And then Otto chose the "sacred", a theme that truly offers enough warranties of being *constant*. But with this result in hand Otto started to philosophize upon religiousness. He imagined that, by discovering the only constant element of the religions, he actually identified the religiousness *being* itself. This was the place where intervened Otto's the mistake of speculative calculus. The constancy of one of the religiousness's elements, compared to their variableness, did not justified Rudolf Otto to equal the religion's "*essence*" to the claimed "constant" element. Otto should have asked himself if not the religion's essence is above the eventual variableness even of *all* elements which compose the religion. Rightly so, we have showed that the religion's being does not consists in *one* of its elements suspected of being constant among variables, but *it consists of a constant report between diverse elements which can be, all of them, without exception, variable*. We have formulated this constant report of variable elements in the definition which we have decided to give it to religion in the previous chapter. One can see that in all cases the religion consists in a report of self-surpassing of the human being and some supposed coordinated of the existence. Obviously, all

the elements entering the religious compound can be variable. The *essence* of a complex phenomenon, a phenomenon existing in diverse variants, it will not necessarily be identical to one of tis elements, not even to the most constant element. In order to make a concession to Otto's theory, we admit that the "sacred" is one of the less variable elements of the religions, or even an element that always intervenes. But if the religion's essence was reduced to this element, then the most accomplished religions should be those which the sentiment of the sacred overwhelmingly gushed up in, in the original and fearsome sense which Otto attempted to restitute to this term. If the religion's essence coincided to the sacred, we would be forced to believe that all the religions penetrated by high metaphysical and ethical themes are *alterations* of the religion, to the extent they comprise the sacred only in an appeased or sublimated form. Otto's definition, once admitted, would actually compel us to criteria destined to evaluate the religions exclusively from the perspective of the "sacred", and the consequences would be catastrophic. All the great religions or the eminently metaphysical religiousness should unavoidably suffer a grave depreciation, and we think that Rudolf Otto did not intend that by any means. Therefore, one cannot reckon the sacred as essence or as nucleus of the religion. In the best scenario, the sacred is one of the most constant elements of the religious phenomenon. There are other objections to be raised as well. The sacred, as presented by Otto, it is actually identical to magic and to some sublimated nuances of the magic. Out of the things argued by Otto it would follow that the most authentic religious life could be found among the people who are strongly mastered by the magical mentality. It is clear, though, that neither this supposition coincided to Rudolf Otto's intention, for he knew the magic and for he knew that the sacred itself is a more sublimated form of the magic. But just because of that, Rudolf Otto should have searched elsewhere the essence of the nucleus of the religion, and he should have not allowed himself to be puzzled by the so-called "constancy" of the magical-sacred elements in all religions.

How could one explain the omnipresence of the "sacred" element in the religious phenomenon? Any religion, by circumscribing at least the self-totalization capacity of the human being in correlation to the existence's coordinates, the sacred finds its room in the religion's constitution on two ways: the magical thinking is, as we have shown it in a special study, one of the most rooted modes of the human spirit, especially when comes about man's adherences to "mystery". We cannot imagine an attempt of self-totalization of the human being where the man's appetite for mystery not to play a certain role. Therefore, it is almost unavoidable that the

magical idea, of an incomparable polyvalence not to gush up, at least in the hypostasis of the "sacred", in any religion's componence.

So, the problem of the sacred is susceptible to revisions and to new contributions. We would want especially to draw the attention upon the *mutability* characteristic to the "magic" or "sacred" within human soul. The sacred, once constituted as sentiment of the human soul, one could say that the sacred became one of the most important soul's energies. As such, the sentiment of the sacred experiences "transfers" from a subject upon another subject, something similar to the human eros. A certain object can be "sacred" to the human soul, for instance a tree, a water-spring, a place, a stone, and then, due to unknown reasons, that certain object to suffer a desacralization. With that, the sentiment of the sacred will not disappear, though, from the human soul, but it will be submitted to a *transfer* upon another object that could be a demon or a deity. When this object becomes desecrated as well, the sentiment of the sacred will, probably, experience another transfer upon another object, for instance upon God, or upon the impersonal principle in Brahmanism, or upon the metaphysical void in Buddhism. But these objects can become desecrated as well, and then the sentiment of the sacred passes again upon other objects, as there could be the moral conscience, the mankind's ideals, and so on. We do not want at any costs one to see an evolution in the transfers of the sacred, especially because the process does not always take place in the order that we have mentioned by listing these examples. We have only wanted to highlight the process of the transfer as such, a transfer taking place as the man could not live without sacred objects. The sentiment of the scared seems to be an energy like the eros is as well, the energy of the sacred being submitted like the eros is to the transfer from an object to another: an energy which the man is dominated by. It is very natural that any attempt of self-totalization and for self-surpassing of the human being in ideal correlation to supposed coordinates of the existence, to play a role of dosage and of sentiment of the sacred. If we wanted to exalt a little the importance of the sacred, we would do that in another sense than Rudolf Otto strived to. By issuing a daring hypothesis, one could admit, for instance, that the sentiment of the sacred has for the human existence in the horizon of the mystery and for the revelation the same role that the eros has it in order to preserve the human being. Such hypothesis would narrow very seriously the claim formulated by psychoanalysts that reckoning the "libido" energy a general substrate of the spiritual life. Out hypothesis would indicate the existence of other energies as well, energies irreducible in their kind, which the spiritual life would be fueled out of.

It is interesting that Rudolf Otto admitted that in diverse religions the sacred was combined with increasingly more rational and ethical elements. Here is declared the contradiction eroding the foundation itself of the edifice of the religious philosophy of the thinker whom we are occupying ourselves with. On one hand, he claimed that the sacred engaged in the religious life is increasingly penetrated by rational elements, while on the other hand he attempted to equal itself the religion's essence to the sentiment of the sacred. Let's weigh in this situation, for a little while. Out of the reduction proposed by Otto it would follow, necessarily, that any sublimation through rationalization and making ethical, of the "sacred", it was destined to alter the religion in its very essence. Besides, all examples offered us by Otto, in order him to communicate the unaltered sentiment of the "sacred" were picked up from primary religions. We do not deny that in the soul of the primitives totally who were dominated by the magical mentality, the sentiment of the scared had a primary force. But in religion as such, the magic (the sacred) does not enter as an element invested with autonomous powers, as it was in the case of the pronounced magical mentality. *The magic (the sacred) appears in religion, in any religion, as an element assimilated to a whole complex of mythological contrivances of a special stylistic facture*. We are highlighting with this the differential point, one never remarked before, one that peremptorily separates the *religiousness* from the simple "magical" thinking and feeling. The sacred, thus incorporated into religion, it will achieve a new dignity: the sacred is elevated, modified, gathered, channeled, entering as a component factor in a complex of spiritual contrivances which aspire to be a great revelation of the cosmic mystery. In other words, regardless how constant the sacred is as factor, the sacred finds its place in any religion only as a subordinate element, an element integrated to a style, to a vision, an element suffering, by that, important modifications of signification. Between the sacred (magic) that dominated the primitive mentality and the sacred entered as subordinate element in the spiritual complex of a religion, there is about the same difference in the spiritual complex of a religion, there is about the same difference between an element of the beauty from the natural order of the things and an analogue element from the aesthetical order characteristic to the art works. The elements of the natural beauty never pass as such in a veritable art work, but they are submitted to a real mutation concerning their signification and function, by the fact that they are assimilated to a certain style imprinted to the spiritual contrivances.

In order us to conclude the critical debate on Rudolf Ottos' philosophy regarding the sacred as essence of the religion, let us add some more observations. The sacred was transformed by Otto in an *aprioristic* and *objective* category in the same time, of the human soul. With that, Otto hoped to obtain the supreme legitimacy titles of the religious phenomenon. We are answering that: instead of wrong legitimization, better no legitimization at all. It is curious that a thinker so familiarized to the matter of the spirit as Rudol Otto was, could wander on such roads. What would happen if the idea of sacred was neither an aprioristic category nor objective? Would the religion lose, by that, any legitimacy? Would the religion remain suspended in void? In our study on the magical thinking, we have shown the fact that one cannot reckon the "magical" as a category; this idea is a totally particular composition of the human spirit, a stereotypical semi-revelation of the "mysteries" and, as such, an idea cannot be totally "objective". Behold why, any enterprise to legitimate the religion in objective sense, it will be dangerous. But the religion does not need this "objectivity" in order to justify its existence. The religion has the same legitimacy titles as any other culture manifestation of the human genius, and it also has one more title than any of those. In the first place, the religion spring out of the human being's tendency to reveal the mysteries to himself, in the horizon of with the man is situated with a force and with a call of a destiny. This tendency belongs to the very definition of the human being, and therefore is inseparable from it. The man reveals himself as man only when following his revelatory destiny, which he is totally solidary with. Besides this general legitimization sufficient itself in order to withstand any bewilderments, the religion has also a *specific justification*, in the virtue of the definition we have given to it. The religion, because it is not necessarily tied to the idea of God (there are religions without a God), it remains a *permanent manifestation* of the human being, as expression of the tendency towards self-totalization or self-surpassing of the human being, in ideal correlation to the ultimate elements and coordinated of the existence's mysteries.

CERTITUDE AND SUPRA-CONSCIENCE

The souly and spiritual experiences of the mystics place us in front of some singular phenomena which, regardless how strange and inaccessible, they deserve an attentive analysis. It

is true that the current psychology is too less preoccupied with the states described by the mystics. Thus, it is normal that the intellectuals of positivist formation to feel themselves a little embarrassed in the presence of such psychological material. No experience related to the domains they could be interested in places them in the situation of understanding the mystics' affirmations and analyses, letting aside to verify those. A more perseverant familiarization with the mystic's life makes us rather intuit that the mystical subject really is a place where exceptional phenomena are produced, phenomena which are absent in the daily life's normalness. By and large, the mystics enjoy the doubtful fame of some human being who are situated in the middle, between normal and pathological. From here comes the shyness of the psychologists to occupy more intensely with the mystics' souly life, because of being more comfortable to approach specifically localized cases than to tackle with phenomena having unsteady borders. With simplistic categories as those of the "normal" and "pathological" we cannot reach too far, as long as even the psychopathology suffers of uncertain criteria. Let's stop only upon the process of transformation of the conscience, a process due to which the mystical subject feels himself surpassed, poured into a new state, which often equals to a "new self". This case is one of the most frequently attested. The mystical subject suddenly feels himself anchored into an existence and lifted up on the level of another vision upon life. This process most often appears accompanied by a sentiment of "certitude" as well, a certitude never experienced by the mystical subject before. In Christian environment – to choose something which we are familiar with – we know about phenomena of this nature since Apostle Paul. Saint Paul crossing through a lightning transformation of all his orientations, he was the amazed witness of a deep process: he felt that he lost his "self" he had before and he achieved a new one. The old self seemed to had died, and through the states gushing out Apostle Paul felt himself another, a "new self": seemingly higher, a self that substituted the old self, or a self that reorganized the old self up to surpassing. This was not, at Saint Paul, a simple literature, but this was at him a psychic and spiritual reality, and we would be unworthy if doubted ourselves of its awful authenticity. Let's compared that to some cases of losses of the conscience of the self and of achieving another self. There are many pathological altered human subjects who believe that themselves are Christs. Which is the differentiation criterion based on which we could differentiate the true mystics from the cases which populate the sanatoria all over the world? Are there such criteria? Of course there are. Only that the psychopathology does not allow itself to be guided by them. The

madman imagining that he is Christ, he is possessed by a fixed idea that became the center of some psychic automatisms. The madman will expect from each visitor to treat him accordingly – any visitor will be invited, for instance, to do the ritual reverences required by such a situation. But a moment later, it could happen that the subject with an exalted conscience to curse like a drunkard. His fixed idea is the irradiation knot of some psychical constraints intercalated into a more or less disarticulated, disorganized, and decomposed conscience. Totally different countenance has the mystic's souly life, who live into Christ, of the mystic invaded by the conscience of that "new self", as Christ Himself would live within the mystic. The identification to the "Christological self" has, in the case of the mystic, unfathomable consequences in depth: the whole conscious and subconscious personality of the mystic is organized and it regroups its powers, usually enhanced powers, around the Christological myth. The conscience of the new flourishes, this time, out of a deep urge to self-totalization and to self-surpassing of the human being in ideal correlation with the ultimate elements of the cosmic mystery, this time summarized into the Christological myth. The new self is even more unitary, more consistently accomplished than the old self. The new self, having an elevated existence and having a consolidated profile and style, in accord with the images of the entire Christological mythology, and this mythology is interpreted and seen at a certain time and in a certain place. One will admit that all cases of simple psychopathology unfold in another sense. In psychopathological cases, the new self is, of course, stubborn and resistant, but only as psychic image, one that does not engage the person in depth. Around the fixed image are grouped a series of psychic automatisms. When not disorganized, the personality will be reduced to petty preoccupations directly connected to circumstances and contingencies of individual nature. In psychopathological cases the new self, a shallow self, regardless how assertive, it still is unsubstantial display, it is a Potemkin-like unconsciousness. A contrary, at mystics the "new self" is accomplished as such. The mystic is totally obliged to a myth, subjugated, with profound echoes; the new self is not only an imagined one but it is a full victory. The mystic's life appears channeled into the templates of a myth, of a metaphysics, and of a style. Usually, the will of the mystic subject is capable of intense efforts or of a linear manifestation of a supra-normal effervescence and consistency. In the pathological cases the so-called "new self" remains a parasite presence able only to unchain violent gesture and affects, equally superficial ant automatic, and all of these in the frame of an incoherent psychology, which the will and the psychic energy appear as

deteriorated or diminished in. The most efficient differential criterion available to us, in order us to discern between the mystical self and the pathological self is this: the sickly cases are characterized by the absence of the myth and of the total behavior at the height of the myth, through the absence of the metaphysics and of the tyle, factors which in a splendid convergence give the mystical self its extraordinary depth and inward consistency. Therefore, the mystical self is a product of the self-totalization and of the self-surpassing, in ideal correlation with the existence's coordinates' the mystical self is the ontic equivalent of the great creation work which we can find on the mythical-religious-metaphysical plan. The mystical self is not a simple "existence"; as existence, as embodiment, as spiritual achievement, the mystical self bears the profound templates of a style. As existential phenomenon and as a product corresponding to the spiritual creation, the mystical self is a phenomenon that could be even rarer than the genius is; therefore, it is supra-normal. Let one see how lucid the mystics' conscience is, how consistent their life is, by ascertaining that in the life of Francisc of Assisi, Mother Theresa, Saint Catherina of Sienna, or Saint John of the Cross[3].

[3] The mystic is endowed by nature with a hypersensitive nervous structure, with an increased hypersensitivity, and he obeys the deprivations due to those. Such a habitus, submitted to grave trials, it will of course predispose to sickly phenomena, but those remain marginal and they do not reach the mystique's essence. Behold, for instance, an odd confession belonging to Mother Theresa, who was one of the most prominent mystic personalities and a genius writer in the same time: "I was – she confessed – at my left hand an angel in flesh and bones, I have such visions only very rarely. Even when angels appear to me, this happens without I to seen them, except this vision that I am talking about. And in this vision, I ought – by the will of the Lord – to see the angel thus: the angel was not tall, he was very beautiful, his face was fiery, so that he seemed to be from among the most chosen angels who are only flame, from among those whom we call seraphs. I saw in his land a long golden lance, and it seems that on the tip of the lance there was a small flame. And then I felt like somebody would have pierced my heart with the lance, for several times, all the way to my entrails, disemboweling me, and he left me totally lit by a great love towards God. The pain was so great than I had to groan, and so great and above any imagination was the sweetness brought to me by that violent pain that I no longer wanted to be saved of it…". Obviously, even the most inoffensive interpretation of this vision will lead us directly to psychoanalysis. We are not going to insist further on. But we must add a few words about some phenomena recorded by the chronicle, and which would take place in the mystics' environment. We are referring here to the phenomena of totally occult character. The mystical subject must be sometimes looked at also as a center where unknown powers are set in motion from, powers worthy of being studied. For now, it is verry difficult to draw a demarcation line between what is a simple product of the imagination and what is real, when we are told, for instance, about the hypnotic power Saint Francisc had upon the wild beasts, or about Saint Theresa or Saint Catherina of Sienna confessed themselves about their corporeal levitation.

Regarding the state of ecstasy, and regarding the process of achieving the mystical self and of getting rid of the old self, precious witnesses are available to us in the mystical literature. Usually, the mystics describe the ecstasy state as being accompanied by the state of a superior certitude. That state of enlightenment, of certitude comparable to nothing, it is for the mystical subject himself a state of hyper- or supra-conscience. The mystic is overwhelmed by the sentiment of self-surpassing, or a renewal of his whole being on a higher plan of the conscience. It is natural that this spiritual experience, one taking place in ideal correlation with the intuited coordinates of the existence, namely in correlation with a fundamental myth or with a religious metaphysics, to be interpreted in diverse ways. The state of ecstasy is felt as destruction of the old self, as a rebirth, as achieving of a new self, as Christological self at Saint Paul, as self that is united with the divine self at diverse mystics, as Brahman depersonalization at the Brahman mistics, as destruction in Buddhism, as state of God before creation at the Islamic mystics, as birth of the logos within man's soul at Meister Eckhart etc. etc. The fact is that, by making abstraction of all interpretations, the state of mystical ecstasy presupposes a state of supra-conscience, in comparison to which the usual states of the conscience become faded, colorless, and pale. According to the mystics' witnesses themselves, the certitude sentiment one experiences during the daily life, does not even close resemble in intensity and quality to the certitude sentiment experienced by mistics in state of ecstasy. In this regard, it remains revelatory the famous note of Pascal, the genius mathematician and thinker, the deep and subtle writer. On a path of parchment pascal recorded what he felt in a state of ecstasy. That patch of parchment was found after Pascal died, as it was sown and hidden in the linen of Pascal's coat. Pascal wrote that for himself and he never mentioned anybody about it. The extraordinary happening the parchment refers to, it was a secret of his life and his most precious memory. This document is all the more precious as it was destined never to be known by other mortals. That text starts thus:

"Monday, 23th of November, the Day of Saint Clement, Pope and martyr, and the day of other martyrs,

The eve of Saint Chrysogonus, martyr and others, at half past ten p.m.

Fire!"

Then pieces of phrases:

"God of Abraham, God of Issac, God of Jacob, not of the philosophers or of the scholars.

Certitude, Certitude, Sentiment, Joy, Peace."

Then other pieces of phrases:

"The people did not know you, but I have known you. Joy, joy, joy, tears of joy."

This abrupt writing, torn apart by empty spaces, and with flames, it is not characteristic to Pascal's usual wording, one classical and full of subtle modulations. This king corresponds to the ecstasy state. The mathematician, the thinker, the technician, the physician, the wither, he was, therefore, a mystic as well. Out of such a combination of orientations and inclinations resulted the metallic suppleness characteristic to Pascal's spirit. But he was also his own company or an extraordinary critical lucidity. The power of the rationality, on one hand, and the intuited and then felt certitude, so impetuously, in state of ecstasy, on the other hand, they gave Pascal, in everything, that complex and still very clear attitude which we would call it as "double criticism". As any French classic he was accustomed, of course, to measure everything with the light of the rationality; everything: namely the world of the senses. But Paqscal did not limit himself to only that: he was the Frenchman who surpasses on himself, namely the rationality that transcends on itself. This was because Pascal controlled his rationality itself in the inward light of his heart and in the perspective of his mystical certitudes. This double criticism has never been accomplished by anybody else with the same force as Pascal did, neither with eth same expression power.

The supra-conscience, as state achieved by mystics in ecstasy, usually after a long souly and spiritual preparation, and most often by using an ascetical technique, through contemplation exercise and through purification and concentration – where do we place this supra-conscience in the order of the spiritual phenomena? Is it actually a result of the contact with the Absolute? All the mistics claim that in a way or another. As far as we are concerned, we have not spared any effort to show that this interpretation of the ecstasy state as such is a non-cosmic and supra-historical state, it is a state as natural as possible to the mystics, only that is an excessive state. Onca can only admit that the mystics really accomplish a hyper- or supra-conscience state having an intensity that banished in a shadow all the usual states of conscience. But we cannot admit that this supra-conscience is always achieved within the same profound stylistic coordinates as the culture contrivances as well. So, this supra-conscience is integrated into history and it does

not escape the human and cosmical conditions. The mystical certitude can be superior as intensity to any other certitude, but this is not the effect of an ultimate objectivity, or a positive transcending, or a contact of or a confluence with the Absolute. This is because, this mystical certitude with its values, is constituted, unavoidably, in stylistic frames, in those deep frames of the human spirit, frames which prove to be as subjective as variable they are. In order to speak in the terms of our metaphysics, the mystical supra-conscience is, at its turn, submitted to *censorship* and to *transcendental braking*, that dominates all human spirit's revelatory attempts.